

Eckhart Tolle Talk Retreat Dimension Of Stillness in Human Relationships

[Speaker 1] (1:33 - 1:29:59)

Welcome, I'm inviting you to be here fully, to inhabit this moment completely, to make yourself at home in this moment, the now, or whatever is, the now, and it's so normal not to be at home in the now, but to look for your home somewhere else. And that deeply conditioned mind pattern, collective, if it is operating in you at this moment, you will already feel restless or impatient and a little voice in the head saying, come on, get on with it. This need to get on with it is the need to move away from now to future, looking for your home, for yourself.

A little hint that may make it easier to be here fully is to feel a certain connectedness with the inner energy field of the body as you sit here. Simply to, it's not complicated, simply to sense that the body is alive, to sense an underlying, this underlying field of aliveness. So some of your attention is there.

It's subtle, but in a very subtle way, yes. Of course the body is alive, every cell is alive. Every cell is intelligent, more intelligent than the human mind.

So just to sense that, so to inhabit the now, one aspect of being fully present, a very rare state so far on this planet. One aspect of that is to also to inhabit the body, to be in it, to have some attention in it. So you're rooted, not totally in the head, not totally in your stream of thoughts, but with some attention in that aliveness that is here.

And then it's easier to sit here and listen to a speaker who is not saying very much, who is giving nothing to believe in or even arousing your emotions. Then it's easier to be here with yourself. So we are here to experience the possibility of living in a different state of consciousness from the normal state, which is not to be here.

To be identified with the stream of thought, which is always about past and future. And as you sit here, sensing, even as you listen, that yes, there is an aliveness throughout my body. And you feel that, and there's enough attention left to listen.

So you're entering a state of alert presence. And in that state you're aware of the words, and in themselves the words so far have not been very important. Because they point to something, that's all.

In themselves they are nothing. So you can be here and allow a state of alert presence to arise, in which you are able to allow this moment, the now, to be. So I'm inviting you to enter that state of consciousness together.

Which from the point of view of the thinking mind, and from the point of view of that sense of self, that is derived from continuous activity, the conceptualized me in the

head, with its story, its name, its accumulation of experiences. From the point of view of that mind made self, this state of consciousness is not significant. It cannot be recognized by thought as significant.

Thought is interested in the next thing, not this. Thought is saying, okay, you've been talking about the now for ten minutes now, what's next? I want to move on to the next thing.

I've come here to be filled up, to be given something, to add something to the content of my mind, that I can take home. And it's not coming. Because nothing needs to be added to you.

And to see that, ultimately, to be yourself fully, nothing needs to be added. That's an amazing revelation. Because everybody's looking to add something to me, to improve me through adding, to make me more complete, the self.

I want to be bigger, more important, more spiritual, more wealthy, more secure, powerful. And if you can't have that, it'll be happy to say, I'm miserable and I want to be even more miserable. A mind made sense of self, a story, happy, unhappy, more unhappy than happy.

And from the point of view of that, this state of consciousness that we are allowing to arise is not significant. Presence, how does that solve my problems? How does that add more to me?

And yet it solves all your problems. So as we sit here, to continue to feel that inner connectedness with the body, and occasionally detect a little voice in the head that's complaining, not enough. I'm not being fed.

Give me something to grasp. And of course, usually this is what happens in this building, an institution of learning or education, where you're being fed information. And you're being told many things, taught many things, except what really matters.

So even if you notice restlessness arising, notice it, watch that, allow that also to be. Allow this moment to be. You might as well, because this moment is always as it is.

There is a suchness to now, the only place there ever is, or that maybe not everybody in this room may know that there's only now. You can remember the past, but only the now. And what you remember once was the now, otherwise it couldn't have happened.

There would be nothing to remember. So it's the power, the light of now that gives life to the past, and the future, a mental projection. Some project it now, one day this is going to happen, tomorrow.

When it comes, it's not the future anymore, it's the now. And you can only project a

future now. You can only think of a future now.

When it comes, it comes as the now. So this is an important realization, because we are moving into the now, and it's good to see how vital that is, because it is life itself. And humans live as if the now were totally not only insignificant, they live trying to get away from it, always, except for rare moments and, ah, I have arrived.

But you never arrive for very long, and then you realize you haven't arrived. I've made it. Oh no, I haven't made it.

So, present moment awareness is why we are here. Not to acquire new ideas. To allow that state that one could call awareness, now awareness, which is a new state of consciousness for human beings, allow that to arise.

And something in you loves it and responds to it. And something else in you would rather be somewhere else, and is saying, this isn't getting me anywhere. And one or two or more of you may leave, because you're not being given content for the mind.

And so you can go from here maybe to a lecture at a higher place of learning, and you will get all that. Lecture on Buddhist philosophy. So much to learn, and yet the essence is so amazingly simple.

So as we sit here, we settle into now. And if something within doesn't feel settled in the now, you notice that. Maybe a little knot in the chest, a little heaviness here, you notice that.

Allow that. An openness, you bring an openness to now, instead of arguing with now or trying to run away from it. So present moment awareness arises, which is a state of great intelligence.

All creativity comes out of that. That state is known by anyone who has achieved mastery in any field. In that field of mastery, he or she is able to access that state of consciousness, where you are no longer dependent on the accumulated knowledge, although that may come into play, you are not dependent on the accumulated knowledge of the mind, where newness can come in.

A new creation, a new insight, realization, fresh, new, alive. That cannot be created by the human mind. The human mind can be a tool in giving that form, but it cannot be derived from the human mind, which is a kind of a computer.

It stores information, it analyzes information, it distinguishes between this and that. As that it works quite well. But creative comes from a deeper place of where the one intelligence that expresses itself in form as the universe, where that resides in each human being, that one intelligence that is far greater than the conditioned little intelligence of the mind.

It encompasses it, but it's far greater. And that is accessible to every human being as that state of consciousness, of presence. And anybody who has achieved mastery in any field is familiar with that state, even if they don't know it.

They may not be able to talk about it, but they sit and an alertness arises. They're not trying to get away from this moment, oh I need to get there. There's total attention to the field of now.

And then the creative impulse comes, or the creative insight happens. And then perhaps at that stage the mind gives it expressions, perhaps through words, or some movement happens, the artist, or even to the scientist, the problem he's been thinking about for hundreds of hours, suddenly he or she enters the state of aware presence in which thought, mind activity subsides. But you don't lose consciousness at all.

There's full awakened consciousness, unconditioned, it has nothing to do with your past. It can arise at any point in your life. Sometimes it arises accidentally, when people are faced with death, or a very dangerous situation that the mind could not cope with, and then the mind steps aside.

And that intelligence takes over while that critical situation lasts. And then people admire you and say, you did such a great thing, and you realize you didn't do anything, it happened. I didn't do anything, I just did it, I don't know.

You are a hero. Well, no, I didn't do anything. So that human beings here and there have tasted that, but it has never arisen on the planet as a new state of consciousness, not collectively, it's happened to a few individuals here and there, and in many cases only in the isolated field of their activity, those who created great things.

And then, as a way of habitual state of consciousness for a few so-called masters who dwell in that new state, but it is the destiny of all humans to become masters, to be masters, to embody that transformed consciousness. That's why we're here. So that needs to be seen, how important it is for you to allow that state to arise.

And it wants to arise. The intelligence wants to move through this form and flower through this form. Humanity on the whole has not yet flowered.

A few flowers here and there, Buddha, Jesus, many of them misunderstood, and a few that we don't know about. And a few partial flowers, great artists, for example. Partial flowers because they were not yet able to live in that state, but they had access to it in their field of endeavor.

And now, because we're arriving at a very critical stage on this planet, this state needs to arise in humans as the next evolutionary step for mankind. We can't get out of our problems on the same level of consciousness that created the problems, neither on a personal level nor on a collective level. Accumulating more information, more facts,

memorize more facts, is that going to solve humanity's problems?

Analysis? It's still the same state of consciousness in which you identified with a mind-made image that is never fulfilled for long, and it needs more. It needs its enemies because it defines its sense of me through others, and it feels stronger in its illusory sense of self.

Me, my story, my name, my history. Humans don't know themselves beyond that, and that covers up that which is unconditioned in each human being, the unconditioned consciousness, because they're totally identified with the conditioned, derive their sense of self from that. And so why we are here is to allow that unconditioned to arise, and this gathering here is part of the transformation of human consciousness.

I'm not giving you some new idea that says it's all going to change at some future point. It's changing already. Otherwise you wouldn't be here if that change were not operating through you, you wouldn't be here.

Except one or two who got dragged here against their will. You must come to this and listen. I don't want to listen to this.

But sometimes even those who got dragged to a gathering suddenly listen. Oh, they recognize something as if they had known it. But this does not, let's not mislead ourselves and make this into a new interesting idea to believe in.

And that idea would be, consciousness is changing. I believe that now. It's not enough.

You've only strengthened your sense of self by identifying with a new belief, and perhaps feeling a little bit more important now, because it's changing through me. And you will know that this is the case when somebody that you meet after this gathering, maybe your partner, your parents or a friend, and you say something about it and they say, no, that's not happiness, it's just nonsense. And you get defensive.

Oh, what are you defending? Yourself. A mental position.

It's become a mental position. And mental positions need to be defended when you identify with a mental position. You derive your sense of self from that mental position.

You need to defend yourself. I'm right. No, you're wrong.

With a lot of emotional violence sometimes. So we're not making it into some new mind stuff. It's easy to happen.

This is how religions arise. At the core of it, there is a deep truth. And then the mind comes in and makes it into something to believe in, and to argue with, and make others wrong, and make yourself right.

Oh, great. Killing others to show that you are right. In that delusion, to make somebody else wrong can be a war on a collective level.

Religious war. Nationalistic war. What on a personal level is the making someone wrong, the need to be right?

Identifying with thought. Completely. That is coming to an end.

And what arises is a state of consciousness that one cannot really talk about because all the words are created by the mind. It's a miracle that one talks about it. The words, however, are not it.

They are only pointers. And if you're trying to understand what I'm pointing to, you won't. It can only be known directly.

How? Allow this moment to be as it is. Align yourself with now.

This is how we started, and this is the central core of our gathering, is to align yourself internally with now. It does not mean that you now become lethargic and no action will ever happen again. The opposite is true.

It is a state that is both deeply at rest and, if needed, dynamic. That state of alignment with now will respond immediately to whatever challenge presents itself in your life at this moment. Action will arise out of that state, out of that intelligence that is in that state.

Far more effective action than action that comes out of the state of denial of now and needs to arrive at some future point to make myself bigger, to get somewhere, to achieve anger, restlessness, not enough. I have to make it. So to become familiar with that incredible state of unconditioned presence, which is the state that...

Nothing else is the whole teaching in Zen, and some of you have read books about Zen or even practiced Zen, and it's usually regarded as very enigmatic teaching. You can't quite figure out what they're talking about. People spend years studying, trying to figure out what are they actually saying?

And there's some deep, some obscure sense that there's something important here, but I continue to miss it. And there are even monks in Zen monasteries who miss it. And it's so simple, it's all embodied, it's all expressed in the beautiful gesture of the Zen master, who would only ever give one answer to the question, what is Zen?

And his answer was wordless. It was this. And more people got it through this Zen master than other Zen masters who gave verbal explanations or would hit you with a stick, that's another method.

And if they didn't get it when he did that, and he looked very fierce, the way Zen

masters look, it shocks you into awakening. But those who didn't get it, they said, did you hear my question? It didn't work.

To become familiar, and I haven't very often gone into it as I'm doing this evening, you must be ready for it, otherwise it wouldn't be happening, what arises in humans, in you, now, is something amazing. It is both simple and profound and amazing and an amazing evolutionary leap. And what is that?

It is the state of, and now not loss of consciousness, instead an enormous intensification of consciousness, compared to which the state of thought is a dreamlike state, as particularly the state of being identified with thought continuously, with that stream of mental noise, which is still the normal state, is a dreamlike state compared to the state of being free of thought. Not that thought will never again arise, but you become familiar with that state in which there is a simple, clear space of alert presence. And the mind is not labelling what is.

The allowing is so deep that it is not necessary to interpret this moment. A greater intelligence than the little conditioned intelligence that is labelling or interpreting this moment now comes into operation. But from the point of view of the mind, the labelling intelligence, the analytical information-gathering mind, from the point of view of that, the state of no thought looks as if you didn't know anything anymore, and it's frightened of that state.

And the amazing thing is, in many of you, because that state, it is an evolutionary universal impulse, that state wants to arise through humans now, and in many of you it is already arising at all kinds of moments, but it's often not recognised for what it is, because the mind cannot recognise it, it can't do anything, there's nothing there for the mind. The mind is object consciousness, it is consciousness with content. You are conscious, the mind is always identified with some content, thought forms, some form.

And when you walk through the city, you can see how the mind is either commenting on what you see, even that is rare, because most of the time the mind is totally elsewhere, and you just have just enough awareness not to bump into people, you're just peripherally aware of your surroundings, just enough, but otherwise you're thinking about something much more important than this moment. And of course it's some form of next moment, so much more important, what you need to get there as quickly as possible, that's normal. And it's so easy to overlook that this state is already arising in you, but it's immediately obscured again by mental noise.

So one thing that you can do is to watch the arising of the state that is free of thought, it is a state of simple, clear, alert presence. It is alert, but relaxed at the same time. And that is the essence of who you are, is that field of aware presence.

That can only be now, it is inseparable from now. That is actually the essence of now, of

what now means. There is a now that is associated with objects that arise in the now, that's mind, thoughts, sense perceptions, people, situations, events, they arise, objects in consciousness arise.

Most humans only know themselves as an object in consciousness, they only know themselves as a story that they are telling themselves, my past. Who are you? The name, which is a sequence of sounds, not much more.

I am John Smith. Oh, okay, now I know. And then there is a role that is in consciousness that you identify with.

Society has given you maybe two or three roles. So you ask, who are you? You get the name as an answer, then you get I'm a mother of three, I'm an accountant, I'm a divorcee, I'm unemployed, I'm a professor of such and such, or whatever it may be, or I'm somebody who has been treated unfairly by life all his life, let me tell you about it.

And so, that's all people know. Mind objects, they derive their sense of identity from mind objects, thoughts, an accumulation of certain thoughts and images in the mind, and it becomes a me. Now, the reason why people cannot stop thinking, it seems that they can't, but they can as the new consciousness is arising, but it's compulsive still to a large extent.

Thought is compulsive. Everybody, almost everybody, the stream of thinking, they don't, I must think, think, think, think, think, all day long, you must think about something, even when there's nothing to think about, you must think, think. And psychologists examine that, even psychologists who are not aware of that there's a new consciousness arising, or if you told them that they would say, come to me for treatment, but even psychologists, they have examined the nature of thought and what kinds of thoughts go through people's heads, and they've come to the conclusion in several studies that ninety-eight percent of, or ninety-nine percent of thought activity is totally repetitive. The same thoughts go through your head again and again.

But the mind is telling you this is terribly important. I need to take responsibility for my life, these are big problems that I'm thinking about. And you have no time for presence, your problems are too important for that.

And you can see the absence when you look into people's eyes sometimes, you can see there's nobody there. They are not here, they are in some, it's they're not really looking, the look is inwards, all their consciousness is absorbed by thought, and that's where their attention is. It can't go out, it goes back in.

There's no emanation, there's no energy coming out of them, it's like a thick veil has descended. And when you look, you can clearly see that they are somewhere totally different, a mind projection. Future probably, unless they're so old that there's little

future left, in which case they live in the past.

And the strange thing is, you're fooling yourself that your thinking serves a useful purpose, that it's actually there to figure out how to solve your problems. But it's actually creating far more problems than solving. The amazing thing is, useless thinking is the place where problems are being created.

There is no problem here, now. Now I can hear one or two minds saying, surely the world is full of problems and dreadful things are happening at this very moment, are you telling me that that's all an illusion? No.

Of course dreadful things are happening at this moment, and that's because it is an externalization of the normal human state of consciousness, which is very dysfunctional now, especially in its final stage. That's very dysfunctional. So enormous problems, yes, but are we solving them?

The peace process, another peace process, and more bombs, and more peace process, and more bombs. It's only from a different state of consciousness that these things can be solved. Now let's look at your own life, which seems that your identity is partly, consists of problems.

The sense of who you feel you are, an essential ingredient in that sense of me, my life situation, my past, my possible future, if there is one, because you can never be sure, my past, my future, that I hope there is a future because I need to complete my story and make it work. It's not really working yet. Not yet.

But any day now, this is actually going to work. That's a strange thing that it doesn't really work in anybody, not for very long, and then again it's, oh, because the story cannot give you a satisfying sense of self. It is only content in the head.

So it's never satisfying for long, you never complete yourself in it, and even if the world thinks you have, when you look into these people who seem to have made it, and even scientists, you realize that even they often think, no, I haven't really solved the ultimate problem yet. Even Einstein, who was a deeply, very much in touch with his inner being, more than most other scientists, hadn't arrived at, hadn't worked out the entire secret of the universe, whatever it was, the unified field theory, or whatever it was called, he couldn't work that out. But to the world, he was the greatest of scientists, and he was, because he had access to that.

And yet, on the level of his story, it didn't seem to have worked out either, because he couldn't figure out the ultimate secret of the universe. So the story cannot work structurally. In the very structure of that sense of self is contained the element of unsatisfactoriness, of not working, not satisfying you, not completing you.

So it's great to see that, oh, that means your life situation is no longer all-absorbing. It

does not absorb your entire attention any more. It's a desperate search to make it, to arrive, to attain, and that goes.

And then you realize there's something far more vital than your life situation. Not that you don't honour it as your situation unfolds in time. You have a role in relation to society, temporary roles, you honour that, without seeking yourself in it, you play the role of mother for a while.

Without being totally identified with the role, then you become a stifling mother. But if you can play, you can honour your role beautifully, without being absorbed in it and deriving your sense of identity from it and thinking that's who I am, because the role comes to an end. The chairman of the big corporation retires, and then he sits there, and the phone doesn't ring any more, and nobody tells him who he is any more.

And he had never inquired more deeply before. It's sometimes a little late when you reach old age, and you have never inquired more deeply into who you are beyond objects in consciousness. So here arises that which in ancient traditions is sometimes called the self, not the little self, the Atman, the one universal intelligence that is the essence of your identity.

It arises as simple, thoughtless awareness. One could say stillness, that's only a small aspect of it. It is an inner field of stillness, and yet it is so alert.

And when you find for the first time there are moments when you can look upon something, perhaps some in nature, perhaps it is a tree, a flower, you perceive it, and it is not being labelled by the mind. That is the arising of thoughtless awareness. There is a knowing in that, but it is very different from what the thinking mind calls knowing.

And you haven't lost the labels. If a label should be needed, it's there. But it's no longer absorbing all your attention, the conceptualised world of labels.

So, so far humans have lived not only in a conceptualised sense of self in the head, but the moment you live in a conceptualised sense of self in the head, you inhabit a conceptualised reality. In other words, whatever you come into contact with is immediately made into mental concepts, it is immediately judged, interpreted and labelled according to the conditioning of the conceptualised mind, and the self that is in here, the me. So people go through life, every situation they immediately interpret it, judge it, classify it, comment on it internally, often complain about it, dislike it, say so.

And this is called intelligence. And at school, the children who are very quick to label things, they are called the good pupils. The best pupils are the ones who can immediately come up with an answer and can retain information and spit it out quickly.

The best student in class, the hand goes up always, immediately, I have the answer. And then you have others who are slower, and the teacher asks the question, and those are

the children in whom this new consciousness often is already arising. And there is not an immediate label there, because the question is actually quite deep, and so it falls into that depth, and the pupil or the student just looks.

And then the teacher says, okay, you don't know, obviously. And it's often, even Einstein was not very good at school, there was too much depth, he couldn't immediately produce good results in exams. So that's the amazing thing, which to the mind looks not important, how is that going to solve my problems?

You look at a flower, you look at a tree, you look at the sky, or anything, and the perception arises in a field of alert stillness. It doesn't matter how long, it's a timeless moment, the now. And maybe after three seconds of clock time, the mind may come in and say, this is a beautiful flower.

But for three seconds, four seconds, five seconds, maybe much more, the sense perception happened within a field of still and alert presence. And maybe even the mind may come in after that and say, oh, I just perceived the flower in complete stillness, which is mental noise, of course. But it is after that, the mind may come in different ways and claim and say something, or it may be very uneasy, the mind may suddenly come up with a huge amount of noise because it's frightened of that state of stillness, because it thinks it's out of control now.

I am not controlling the universe anymore. If I don't interpret and judge every moment, how do I figure out what this thing is all about, this moment? And the amazing thing is, more often than not, you don't need to figure out what this is all about, you just need to look.

In the same way that the artist looks at a canvas in the state of that intense presence, you look at a situation, and not attempting to figure it out. That is habitual, of course. So the ability arises, at first you see it when you're in little perceptions, and it's not being labeled.

There's a spaciousness suddenly that is there. And what that means is, the world around you that before was a conceptualized reality, because you imposed mental labels on everything immediately, which deadened the world around you, people don't realize how dead the universe that they inhabit has become through immediate and compulsive mental labeling. All you relate to then is the labels.

You mistake the labels for what's there. On a simple level, you mistake, if that's a lily, I'm not sure, the label lily, you think you know what it is. What is this?

Oh, it's a lily. Hmm. That's the end of it.

But there is such, the mystery that is there, the incredible beauty and depth that is there, is gone completely because you've labeled it. But if you allow the perception to

arise in the field of stillness, it suddenly comes to life. It has a depth to it, and a beauty, and even a sacredness, which before, you're completely unaware of.

And the entire universe you realize is an alive organism that humans have deadened. Well, to themselves, as far as they are concerned, the world is a dead place. So when you begin to allow perceptions to arise without compulsive labeling, the world comes alive again.

There's a depth to everything and a mystery. You don't fall into the delusion that when you have a little sound about something, then you know what it is. Lily.

Or even worse with human beings, when you have a little set of judgments about a human being, then you think you know who that human being is. And the depth, aliveness, and sacredness that is there in every human being is gone totally. It's not there for you.

All you know is that, oh, he is a such and such, she is a such and such, and this is what she did and said, and this is how she always is. And if you've gone, all you know is you've said a little bit about the conditioning of that person and a lot about your own conditioning. That's all.

It was partly a projection of your own conditioning and partly perhaps a seeing of the conditioning of that person, if you're lucky. And so you reduce human beings to absurd caricatures by imposing a set of labels and think that's... People even do it to their partners.

They don't see the partner anymore, just the opinion now, the labels that they have, that's how she is. And that's... Human relations are so problematic, conflict-ridden, because there are no human relations.

There are conditioned mind entities relating to each other, but the being of the human being is obscured by the labeling. The being isn't there, just minds interacting. So at first you walk...

Nature can be a great help as you enter that state of aware presence. You walk through nature or you sit somewhere and simply watch for a while. Now this is very much like a one-year-old baby would watch the world, a baby that hasn't accumulated the labels yet in the mind.

There's a small stage when the baby's aware of surroundings, but has not yet accumulated the necessary labels to interpret the surroundings. So it hasn't even started to ask, what's this, what's this, what's this yet, because that's the mind. It simply looks.

And some babies, you can see it very clearly, there's enormous consciousness light shining through their eyes. Enormous love and joy looking through their eyes at you. And

you know they're not saying anything in their heads about you.

They have no opinion about you. There's true communication, true communion as they look. And some humans can sense that, so they feel drawn to that baby and they don't want to leave.

They might make funny noises or something, but the baby doesn't really need that. But they feel drawn to the baby because there's almost a self-recognition there. And that is the destiny of humans, to re-enter that state.

But when they re-enter that state, it will have an added knowing to it, because they have moved through the stage of mind and thought. Humanity as a whole has moved through that evolutionary cycle that is identification with thought. A long, long, long cycle for humanity.

And it's been tough. It's been tough on humans, particularly in the later stages. In the later stages of any evolutionary cycle, that cycle, that state that is in that cycle displays increasing dysfunction.

So it's been tough for humans and even more tough for the planet. As humans are moving into greater and greater dysfunction because the cycle of identification with thought is coming to an end and a thought-based self is coming to an end, the planet is suffering greatly from human madness, because we really need to call it now madness. Nothing wrong, it's not saying that it shouldn't be happening.

It is right for humans to be mad at this moment. But we need to see it also as madness that is also right. The caterpillar becomes a butterfly.

In the final stage of the caterpillar's life, the caterpillar becomes dysfunctional as a caterpillar. It doesn't work anymore. Humans now have become dysfunctional on the planet.

It's not working anymore. We are destroying ourselves and the planet. Yes, this is the end of the evolutionary cycle.

That's why it's mad. Not that it shouldn't be happening. This is within the totality.

It could not be otherwise. But part of this is to see that it is mad, not condemning it as bad and shouldn't be happening, but to see it. And the seeing is already the beginning of liberation.

Because that which sees the conditioned and its dysfunction is the arising of the unconditioned consciousness. And so increasingly there's the ability to witness your own mind. And then there's the ability to dwell in the gaps.

One thought comes to an end, no other thought has started. There's a gap of still

presence. And in that gap there's great intelligence at work.

This could be a very passive state, you're sitting on a park bench, simply looking in amazement at the beauty of all these forms all around you. And then it exists as a dynamic state which arises whenever you are confronted with a challenge. And life tends to do that.

It doesn't leave you alone for too long. And up comes another challenge, some situation. And instead of being drawn back into the old reaction, the conditioned reaction, the old resistance pattern, instead of that you meet the challenge through alert presence, stillness, allow it to be.

And there's a flow, one could say, a current of awareness flows through this form into the situation that is the challenge. And this is an amazing thing, the arising of this ability to simply look, to simply give attention. So what then flows through you, one could say, all words are limited, so take that into consideration, they're only approximations.

One could say what flows through you is, or what arises, a field of attention. And that is the expression of unconditioned intelligence. And any situation that you face fully in that way, because the old reaction never faces a situation fully, it denies it, runs away from it, it never faces this moment fully, which is the only place where a challenge can arise.

And in that way it is faced immediately and intelligent action, if action should be needed, arises. Or no action may arise and the intelligence that you are now aligned with, the one intelligence, acts upon the situation from some external point. In other words, here's the challenge, attention flows, you allow the prerequisite for the current of awareness to flow into a situation, the prerequisite for that is that you allow this moment to be, because you have given up arguing with what is.

You have seen that is already is. Whatever is, is. Not that it cannot be changed, but at this moment it is as it is.

Not only that, it also could not be otherwise. If it is, it couldn't be otherwise. Because the tiniest we separate events and say this is a separate event, this is a separate situation, nothing is separate, every event happens within the totality of the entire cosmos, it is a web of interconnectedness with which every seemingly separate event is connected.

Whatever happens is totally connected with everything else. So how could it not, it couldn't be otherwise for that reason. So it is madness to argue internally with the suchness of now.

And that is, of course, to argue internally with the suchness of now is the normal human state of dysfunction. And they think this is how they are going to change the world. But the opposite is true.

This is how the world remains the same in its dysfunction. So the shift now is, you see the futility of arguing with the suchness of now, no matter what form it takes. And then you allow the suchness of now to be as it is, which is not a state of passivity, but dynamic.

You allow it. Now, certain situations, it is enough to allow the situation. Other situations require action, intelligent action.

And the one intelligence that is greater than the human mind, the unconditioned, operates. And it may operate as an external event that suddenly changes the situation, a coincidence, a factor that comes in that meets the needs of this moment just right. And perhaps you did nothing.

In some cases you just sit there and watch. In some cases no immediate action is possible. There are situations, the challenge is there, but there's not yet anything I can do.

So it's simply allowed and you continue the outflow of awareness that simply is there. And then when action becomes possible or necessary, it happens either through you or through an external factor or the situation changes by itself. And this is amazing realization that in this way, problems do not arise anymore in your life.

Because problems is to mentally dwell on challenges that either are not even here, that might arise, or challenges that at this time you cannot do anything about. And then you play around with thought in circles, round and round and round about these situations. And that's a problem.

Now you have a problem. And in its madness, the mind-based self likes that. It doesn't say that openly, but it can increase its sense of self, you can enhance, it can enhance its sense of self because now it has serious problems.

So I must be important. This is the underlying assumption. And I like, therefore I like to think about how important my problems are.

And so you get totally absorbed by your life situation, by the story in the head, and this is the state that I described as the state of absence. You're gone. Dream world in the head.

Thinking you're taking responsibility for your life by worrying and lying awake at night thinking about what the future holds for you, and what the future might do to you, or what the future might withhold from you. And it's a, so that's, oh my God, this is how humans live. This is the normal way to live.

And of course, by the way, normal these days means insane. And so the root of dysfunction is in oneself. Where else could you really find it?

And the transformation of the world is in yourself. Out of that transformed consciousness comes a transformed world. Because we know one good thing that has come out of physics, apart from the atom bomb and chemical warfare, or whatever they do, hydrogen bomb, a good thing that has come out of it is they have seen the interconnectedness between the observing consciousness and that which is being observed.

A change in perspective changes what you're observing. And that was an amazing realization that came out of modern physics that has enormous repercussions. And you can see how the world, what we experience as the world in reality, now I'm talking about especially the so-called man-made world, human-made world.

What we really experience, what you experience when you switch on your TV, or in your interact, the world, whatever you experience as the world is basically your state of consciousness. So, and it's collective, it's not a personal, nobody to blame for anything. It's a collective human condition.

We have created this world. It is not entirely mad. There are redeeming features to it.

If it were entirely mad, it would already have self-destructed. It got very close in the latter, in the last century, it already got very close several times to self-destruction in its madness. And it is still close.

We are not free yet from the possibility of self-destruction, although the new state is arising. The only question is, is it arising fast enough? Is it arising on a wide enough scale to compensate for the increasing madness of the old egoic consciousness and what it's doing to the planet and to human beings, to themselves, what they are doing to themselves?

The fact that we are here is a good sign. This is the arising of the new. I don't make any predictions, because I don't know whether humanity is going to make it.

Ultimately, of course, it doesn't matter. The universe is infinitely abundant in the life forms that it manifests. The one intelligence manifesting as so many life forms.

And many life forms, after a while, the one consciousness says, okay, that's enough. I'm withdrawing from there. And it's gone.

And then it flows into something else, and maybe it flowers through this form. I know that it wants to flower through the human form. And there's no predicting what the world will look like once human consciousness has flowered collectively.

There's no point in even speculating, be it enough to say that you wouldn't even recognize the planet. It would look like some strange, perhaps heavenly realm. And if you went there with an ego, you would feel very uncomfortable.

Oh, I need to get back to the old earth. So that, it is a great challenge and a great adventure and a great opportunity in life at this time. Not that you are separate from the consciousness, you are an expression of the one consciousness.

The question is, is that one consciousness now going to move through you? Is the cosmic evolutionary impulse finding a sufficiently clear space here, so that it can move in and move through, and then emanate through this form. Some people will create wonderful things.

Others will simply emanate the state of joy, peace, aliveness, and love, and walk through the world, emanating that state, and be a blessing to whoever they meet. That's quite enough, isn't it? And others may create great things.

Others will say, I don't need to create anything. It's simply to embody that state. That's the flowering, as I mentioned before somewhere, maybe in the book, I can't remember.

The planet, there was plant life on the planet for millions of years, they say, before there ever was a flower. After millions of years of plant life, I'm told, one day the first flower must have opened. And when a plant becomes a flower, it's an analogy, as I'm using it here, for a new level of, a new dimension of being, of consciousness.

But what is happening to humans is much vaster than even that. But it's a beautiful analogy. And then it took thousands of years before another flower came, probably, and then two or three.

And then suddenly a profusion of flowers all over the planet, and this is very similar. We've had early flowers in humanity. The great teachers of humanity, one can look upon them as early flowerings of human consciousness.

The possibilities that are inherent in the human form for the first time express themselves fully through those great teachers, sages, only some of whom we know about. Some were relatively unknown. So there were rare flowers here and there.

And then a time comes when we are ready for the flowering on a much larger scale. And it cannot not be now, otherwise it's the end. So it must be now.

This is the time. It goes far beyond anything personal in your life. On a personal level, it's very pleasant because it frees you from inhabiting an absurdly complex world of problem-making.

That's great. So on a personal level, it takes the weight of you, the weight of the self, the mind-made self, that already the Buddha, the early flower that he was, recognized a profound insight too early, probably for much too early for his time, to see the illusion of self that was the primordial insight of the Buddha. My God, he saw that.

And so that's where it flowered. As one Buddhist monk who was asked to explain the meaning of Buddhism simply said, the meaning of Buddhism is this, no self, no problem. Finished.

Oh, yes, but I'd like to learn some philosophy. Can you teach me? I have plenty of time.

Please give me time, says the self. I want to complete myself in time. So the burden of self, of that delusion, you don't walk around with that heaviness anymore, because you become a heaviness on the planet, and whatever you walk on you crush.

A heavy self walking, millions of heavy selves walking on the planet, crushing life. And they don't even know it. Life?

What's life? It's just a little something, says the mind. This is timber.

It's worth six million dollars, I would say, so okay, we can cut that in no time. And it's gone. The forest that was there for a hundred thousand years, a field of sacredness, but the mind can't see it because the mind labelled it.

And that's nobody's fault. It's the human dysfunction. So the heaviness of self, the heaviness of self leaves you.

Free of that delusion, that entity that was so hard to live with, the me, that I had such a problematic relationship with. And now, there's simply, where there was a heavy me, there's a field of aware presence. Walking, sitting, moving, being.

It doesn't make problems anymore for itself, for other humans, for the planet. It doesn't create suffering anymore for itself, for other humans, for the planet. So this is why, since ancient times, they've used the word liberation to talk about this shift in consciousness, because all the ancient teachings, they point to it, and they sometimes call it liberation.

From what? Even in the New Testament, they use that expression. Free.

Jesus talks about, you will be free. You will know the truth. The truth will make you free.

Free, they said, we're already free. We are nobody's slaves. And Jesus said, no, you're not.

And he used the language that he used at the time. He said, you are the slaves of sin. Now, what's sin?

If he were talking nowadays, he would have said, you're totally conditioned entities and you're completely unconscious. You're the slaves of your conditioning. That's all.

It's the dysfunction that is sin. No more. It's nobody's fault.

It's collective dysfunction, that's all. It's not the way in which it's usually interpreted, but

there's a truth in it, a deep truth. And just as there's original sin, there's original innocence, which is the sanity in you, which is the unconditioned consciousness in you, that's far vaster than the little original sin.

Far vaster. The little original sin is a little illusion. It only appears big when you're totally trapped in it.

So this is the liberation already happening. And as you walk away from here, you will have lost some weight. Not physical weight, that doesn't matter, but the weight of me, self, the problem making me.

If this were not already happening here, you would not have been able to sit here for an hour and a half, according to clock time. It would have become unbearable. Or you had to exert such willpower that you made yourself sit here.

But that's unlikely. So the greatest adventure that any human being can be involved in, you are involved. And some people are still asking about their life purpose.

[Speaker 2] (1:31:32 - 1:31:33)

Welcome.

[Speaker 1] (1:31:46 - 4:40:35)

I'm inviting you to be here fully, to inhabit this moment completely, to make yourself at home in this moment. The now, or whatever is. The now.

And it's so normal not to be at home in the now, but to look for your home somewhere else. And that deeply conditioned mind pattern, collective, if it is operating in you at this moment, you will already feel restless or impatient. And a little voice in the head saying, come on, get on with it.

This need to get on with it is the need to move away from now into the future. Looking for your home, for yourself. A little hint that may make it easier to be here fully is to feel a certain connectedness with the inner energy field of the body as you sit here.

Simply to, it's not complicated, simply to sense that the body is alive. To sense an underlying, this underlying field of aliveness. So some of your attention is there.

It's subtle, just, but in a very subtle way. Yes. Of course the body is alive.

Every cell is alive. Every cell is intelligent. More intelligent than the human mind.

So just to sense that, so to inhabit the now, one aspect of being fully present, a very rare state so far on this planet. One aspect of that is to also to inhabit the body, to be in it, to have some attention in it. So you're rooted, not totally in the head, not totally in your

stream of thoughts, but with some attention in that aliveness that is here.

And then it's easier to sit here and listen to a speaker who is not saying very much, who is giving nothing to believe in, or even arousing your emotions. Then it's easier to be here with yourself. So we are here to experience the possibility of living in a different state of consciousness from the normal state, which is not to be here.

To be identified with a stream of thought, which is always about past and future. And as you sit here, sensing, even as you listen, that yes, there is an aliveness throughout my body. And you feel that, and there's enough attention left to listen.

So you're entering a state of alert presence. And in that state, you're aware of the words. And in themselves, the words so far have not been very important.

Because they point to something, that's all. In themselves, they are nothing. So you can be here and allow a state of alert presence to arise, in which you are able to allow this moment, the now, to be.

So I'm inviting you to enter that state of consciousness together. Which, from the point of view of the thinking mind, and from the point of view of that sense of self that is derived from continuous thought activity, the conceptualized me in the head, with its story, its name, its accumulation of experiences. From the point of view of that mind-made self, this state of consciousness is not significant.

It cannot be recognized by thought as significant. Thought is interested in the next thing, not this. Thought is saying, okay, you've been talking about the now for 10 minutes now.

What's next? I want to move on to the next thing. I've come here to be filled up, to be given something, to add something to the content of my mind.

That I can take home, and it's not coming. Because nothing needs to be added to you. And to see that, ultimately, to be yourself fully, nothing needs to be added.

That's an amazing revelation. Because everybody's looking to add something to me, to improve me through adding, to make me more complete, the self. I want to be bigger, more important, more spiritual, more wealthy, more secure, powerful.

And if you can't have that, it'll be happy to say, I'm miserable, and I want to be even more miserable. A mind made sense of self, a story, happy, unhappy, more unhappy than happy. And from the point of view of that, this state of consciousness that we are allowing to arise is not significant.

Presence, how does that solve my problems? How does that add more to me? And yet, it solves all your problems.

So as we sit here, to continue to feel that inner connectedness with the body, and

occasionally detect a little voice in the head that's complaining, uh, uh, uh, not enough. I'm not being fed. Give me something to grasp.

And of course, usually this is what happens in this building, an institution of learning or education, where you're being fed information. And you're being told many things, taught many things except what really matters. So even if you notice restlessness arising, notice it, watch that, allow that also to be, allow this moment to be.

You might as well because this moment is always as it is. There is a suchness to now, the only place there ever is. Or if that may be, not everybody in this room may know that there's only now.

You can remember the past, but only in the now. And what you remember once was the now, otherwise it couldn't have happened. There would be nothing to remember.

So it's the power, the light of now that gives life to the past and the future, a mental projection. Some project it now. One day this is going to happen tomorrow.

When it comes, it's not the future anymore. It's the now. And you can only project a future now.

You can only think of a future now. When it comes, it comes as the now. So this is an important realization because we are moving into the now, and it's good to see how vital that is because it is life itself.

And humans live as if the now were totally, not only insignificant, they live trying to get away from it. Always, except for rare moments. Ah, I have arrived.

But you never arrive for very long. And then you realize you haven't arrived. I've made it.

Oh no, I haven't made it. So present moment awareness is why we are here. Not to acquire new ideas.

To allow that state that one could call awareness, now awareness, which is a new state of consciousness for human beings. Allow that to arise. And something in you loves it and responds to it.

And something else in you would rather be somewhere else and is saying, this isn't getting me anywhere. And one or two or more of you may leave. Because you're not being given content for the mind.

And so you can go from here maybe to a lecture at a higher place of learning, and you will get all that. Lecture on Buddhist philosophy. So much to learn.

And yet the essence is so amazingly simple. So as we sit here, we settle into now. And if something within doesn't feel settled in the now, you notice that.

Maybe a little knot in the chest, a little heaviness here, you notice that. Allow that. An openness, you bring an openness to now.

Instead of arguing with now or trying to run away from it. So present moment awareness arises, which is a state of great intelligence. All creativity comes out of that.

That state is known by anyone who has achieved mastery in any field. In that field of mastery, he or she is able to access that state of consciousness. Where you are no longer dependent on the accumulated knowledge, although that may come into play, you're not dependent on the accumulated knowledge of the mind where newness can come in.

A new creation, a new insight, realization, fresh, new, alive. That cannot be created by the human mind. The human mind can be a tool in giving that form, but it cannot be derived from the human mind, which is a kind of a computer.

It stores information, it analyzes information, it distinguishes between this and this and that. As that, it works quite well. But creative comes from a deeper place of where the one intelligence that expresses itself in form as the universe, where that resides in each human being, that one intelligence that is far greater than the conditioned little intelligence of the mind.

It encompasses it, but it's far greater. And that is accessible to every human being as that state of consciousness, of presence. And anybody who has achieved mastery in any field is familiar with that state, even if they don't know it.

They may not be able to talk about it, but they sit, and an alertness arises. They're not trying to get away from this moment, oh, I need to get there. No, there's total attention to the field of now.

And then the creative impulse comes, or the creative insight happens. And then perhaps at that stage, the mind gives it expressions, perhaps through words, or some movement happens for the artist, or even to the scientist. The problem he's been thinking about for hundreds of hours, suddenly he or she enters the state of aware presence in which thought, mind activity subsides.

But you don't lose consciousness at all. There's full awakened consciousness. Unconditioned, it has nothing to do with your past.

It can arise at any point in your life. Sometimes it arises accidentally, when people are faced with death, or a very dangerous situation that the mind could not cope with. And then the mind steps aside.

And that intelligence takes over while that critical situation lasts. And then people admire you and say, you did such a great thing. And you realize you didn't do anything.

It happened. I didn't do anything. I just did it.

I don't know. You are a hero. Well, no, I didn't do anything.

So that human beings here and there have tasted that. But it has never arisen on the planet as a new state of consciousness, not collectively. It's happened to a few individuals here and there.

And in many cases, only in the isolated field of their activity, those who created great things. And then as a way of habitual state of consciousness for a few so-called masters who dwell in that new state. But it is the destiny of all humans to become masters, to be masters, to embody that transformed consciousness.

That's why we're here. So that needs to be seen, how important it is for you to allow that state to arise. And it wants to arise.

The intelligence wants to move through this form and flower through this form. Humanity on the whole has not yet flowered. A few flowers here and there, Buddha, Jesus, many of them misunderstood, and a few that we don't know about.

And a few partial flowers, great artists, for example. Partial flowers because they were not yet able to live in that state, but they had access to it in their field of endeavor. And now because we're arriving at a very critical stage on this planet, this state needs to arise in humans as the next evolutionary step for mankind.

We can't get out of our problems on the same level of consciousness that created the problems, neither on a personal level nor on a collective level. Accumulating more information, more facts, memorize more facts, is that going to solve humanity's problems? Analysis.

It's still the same state of consciousness in which you're identified with a mind-made image that is never fulfilled for long, and it needs more. It needs its enemies because it defines its sense of me through others. And it feels stronger in its illusory sense of self.

Me, my story, my name, my history. Humans don't know themselves beyond that. And that covers up that which is unconditioned in each human being, the unconditioned consciousness, because they're totally identified with the unconditioned, derive their sense of self from that.

And so why we are here is to allow that unconditioned to arise, and this gathering here is part of the transformation of human consciousness. I'm not giving you some new idea that says it's all going to change at some future point. It's changing already.

Otherwise you wouldn't be here if you were not, if that change were not operating through you, you wouldn't be here. Except one or two who got dragged here against

their will. You must come to this and listen.

I don't want to listen to this. But sometimes even those who got dragged to a gathering suddenly listen. Oh, they recognize something as if they had known it.

But this does not, let's not mislead ourselves and make this into a new interesting idea to believe in. And that idea would be consciousness is changing. I believe that now.

It's not enough. You've only strengthened your sense of self by identifying with a new belief and perhaps feeling a little bit more important now, because it's changing through me. And you will know that this is the case when somebody that you meet after this gathering, maybe your partner, your parents or a friend, and you'd say something about it and they say, no, that's not happiness, it's just nonsense.

And you get defensive. Oh, what are you defending? Yourself.

A mental position. It's become a mental position. And mental positions need to be defended.

When you identify with a mental position, you derive your sense of self from that mental position. You need to defend yourself. I'm right.

No, you're wrong. With a lot of emotional violence sometimes. So we're not making it into some new mind stuff.

It's easy to happen. This is how religions arise. At the core of it, there is a deep truth.

And then the mind comes in and makes it into something to believe in and to argue with and make others wrong and make yourself right. Oh, great. Killing others to show that you are right.

In that delusion, to make somebody else wrong can be a war on a collective level, religious war, nationalistic war. What on a personal level is the need to be right? Identifying with thought.

Completely. That is coming to an end. And what arises is a state of consciousness that one cannot really talk about because all the words are created by the mind.

It's a miracle that one talks about it. The words, however, are not it. They are only pointers.

And if you're trying to understand what I'm pointing to, you won't. And it can only be known directly. How?

Allow this moment to be as it is. Align yourself with now. This is how we started.

And this is the central core of our gathering, is to align yourself internally with now. It

does not mean that you now become lethargic and no action will ever happen again. The opposite is true.

It is a state that is both deeply at rest and, if needed, dynamic. That state of alignment with now will respond immediately to whatever challenge presents itself in your life at this moment. Action will arise out of that state, out of that intelligence that is in that state.

Far more effective action than action that comes out of the state of denial of now and needs to arrive at some future point to make myself bigger, to get somewhere, to achieve anger, restlessness, not enough. I have to make it. So to become familiar with that incredible state of unconditioned presence, which is the state that nothing else is, the whole teachings in Zen, and some of you have read books about Zen or even practiced Zen, and it's usually regarded as very enigmatic teaching.

You can't quite figure out what they're talking about. People spend years studying, trying to figure out what are they actually saying? And there's some deep, some obscure sense that there's something important here, but I continue to miss it.

And there are even monks in Zen monasteries who miss it. And it's so simple, it's all embodied, it's all expressed in the beautiful gesture of the Zen master who would only ever give one answer to the question, what is Zen? And that answer was wordless, it was this.

And more people got it through this Zen master than other Zen masters who gave verbal explanations or would hit you with a stick, that's another method. And if they didn't get it when he did that, and he looked very fierce, the way Zen masters look, it shocks you into awakening. But those who didn't get it, they said, did you hear my question?

It didn't work. And to become familiar, and I haven't very often gone into it as I'm doing this evening, you must be ready for it, otherwise it wouldn't be happening, what arises in humans, in you, now, is something amazing. It is both simple and profound and amazing and an amazing evolutionary leap.

And what is that? It is the state of, and now please don't be frightened, it is the state of no thought. Without loss of consciousness, instead, an enormous intensification of consciousness compared to which the state of thought is a dreamlike state, as particularly the state of being identified with thought continuously, with that stream of mental noise, which is still the normal state, is a dreamlike state compared to the state of being free of thought.

Not that thought will never again arise, but you become familiar with that state in which there is a simple, clear space of alert presence. And the mind is not labeling what is. The allowing is so deep that it is not necessary to interpret this moment.

A greater intelligence than the little conditioned intelligence that is labeling or interpreting this moment now comes into operation. But from the point of view of the mind, the labeling intelligence, the analytical information-gathering mind, from the point of view of that, the state of no thought looks as if you didn't know anything anymore, and it's frightened of that state. And the amazing thing is, in many of you, because that state, it is an evolutionary, universal impulse, that state wants to arise through humans now, and in many of you it is already arising at all kinds of moments, but it's often not recognized for what it is, because the mind cannot recognize it, it can't do anything, there's nothing there for the mind.

The mind is object consciousness, it is consciousness with content, you're conscious, the mind is always identified with some content, thought forms, some form. And when you walk through the city, you can see how the mind is either commenting on what you see, even that is rare, because most of the time the mind is totally elsewhere, and you just have just enough awareness not to bump into people, you're just peripherally aware of your surroundings, just enough, but otherwise you're thinking about something much more important than this moment. And of course it's some form of next moment, so much more important, but you need to get there as quickly as possible.

That's normal. And it's so easy to overlook that this state is already arising in you, but it's immediately obscured again by mental noise. So one thing that you can do is to watch the arising of the state that is free of thought, it is a state of simple, clear, alert presence.

It is alert but relaxed at the same time. And that is the essence of who you are, is that field of aware presence. That can only be now, that is inseparable from now, that is actually the essence of now, of what now means.

There is a now that is associated with objects that arise in the now, that's mind, thoughts, sense perceptions, people, situations, events, they arise, objects in consciousness arise. Most humans only know themselves as an object in consciousness, they only know themselves as a story that they are telling themselves. My past, who are you?

The name, which is a sequence of sounds, not much more. I am John Smith. Oh, okay, now I know.

And then there is a role that is in consciousness that you identify with, society has given you maybe two or three roles. So you ask, who are you? You get the name as an answer, then you get, I'm a mother of three, I'm an accountant, I'm a divorcee, I'm unemployed, I'm a professor of such and such, or whatever it may be, or I'm somebody who's been treated unfairly by life, all is life, let me tell you about it.

And so that's all people know. Mind objects, they derive their sense of identity from mind

objects, thoughts, an accumulation of certain thoughts and images in the mind, and it becomes a me. Now, the reason why people cannot stop thinking, it seems that they can't, but they can as the new consciousness is arising, but it's compulsive still to a large extent.

Thought is compulsive. Everybody, almost everybody, the stream of thinking, they don't, I must think, think, think, think, think all day long, you must think about something, even when there's nothing to think about, you must think, think. And psychologists examine that, even psychologists who are not aware of that there's a new consciousness arising, or if you told them that, they would say, come to me for treatment.

But even psychologists, they have examined the nature of thought and what kinds of thoughts go through people's heads, and they've come to the conclusion in several studies that 98% of, or 99% of thought activity is totally repetitive. The same thoughts go through your head again and again. But the mind is telling you this is terribly important.

I need to take responsibility for my life, these are big problems that I'm thinking about. And you have no time for presence, the problems are too important for that. And you can see the absence when you look into people's eyes sometimes, you can see there's nobody there.

They are not here, they are in some, it's the, they're not really looking, the look is inwards, it's all their consciousness is absorbed by thought, and that's where their attention is. It can't go out, it goes back in. And there's no emanation, there's no energy coming out of them, it's like a thick veil has descended.

And when you look, you can clearly see that they are somewhere totally different, a mind projection, future probably, unless they're so old there's little future left, in which case they'll live in the past. And the strange thing is, you're fooling yourself that your thinking serves a useful purpose, that it's actually there to figure out how to solve your problems. But it's actually creating far more problems than solving.

The amazing thing is, useless thinking is the place where problems are being created. There is no problem here, now. Now I can hear one or two minds saying, surely the world is full of problems and dreadful things are happening at this very moment, are you telling me that that's all an illusion?

No, of course dreadful things are happening at this moment. And that's because it is an externalization of the normal human state of consciousness, which is very dysfunctional now, especially in its final stage. That is very dysfunctional.

So enormous problems, yes, but are we solving them? The peace process, another peace process, and more bombs, and more peace process, and more bombs. It's only from a

different state of consciousness that these things can be solved.

Now let's look at your own life, which seems that your identity is partly consists of problems, the sense of who you feel you are, an essential ingredient in that sense of me, my life situation, my past, my possible future, if there is one, because you can never be sure, my past, my future, that I hope there is a future because I need to complete my story and make it work. It's not really working yet, not yet, but any day now this is actually going to work. That's a strange thing that it doesn't really work in anybody, not for very long, and then again it's, oh, because the story cannot give you a satisfying sense of self.

It is only content in the head, so it's never satisfying for long, you never complete yourself in it, and even if the world thinks you have, when you look into these people who seem to have made it, and even scientists, you realize that even they often think, no, I haven't really solved the ultimate problem yet. Even Einstein, who was a deeply, very much in touch with his inner being, more than most other scientists, it hadn't arrived at the, hadn't worked out the entire secret of the universe, whatever it was, the unified field theory, or whatever it was called, he couldn't work that out, but the world, to the world he was the greatest of scientists, and he was, because he had access to that, and yet, on the level of his story, it didn't have seemed to work out either, because he couldn't figure out the ultimate secret of the universe. So the story, in its, cannot work structurally. In the very structure of that sense of self is contained the element of unsatisfactoriness, of not working, not satisfying you, not completing you.

So it's great to see that, oh, that means your life situation is no longer all absorbing, it does not absorb your entire attention anymore, it's a desperate search to make it, to arrive, to attain, and that goes, and then you realize there's something far more vital than your life situation, not that you don't honor it, as your situation unfolds in time, you have a role in relation to society, temporary roles, you honor that without seeking yourself in it, you play the role of mother for a while, without being totally identified with the role, then you become a stifling mother. But if you can play, you can honor your role beautifully without being absorbed in it, and deriving your sense of identity from it, and thinking that's who I am, because the role comes to an end. The chairman of the big corporation retires, and then he sits there, and the phone doesn't ring anymore, and nobody tells him who he is anymore, and he had never inquired more deeply before, it's sometimes a little late when you reach old age, and you have never inquired more deeply into who you are beyond objects in consciousness.

So here arises that which in ancient traditions is sometimes called the self, not the little self, the Atman, the one universal intelligence that is the essence of your identity. It arises as simple, thoughtless awareness. One could say stillness, that's only a small aspect of it.

It is an inner field of stillness, and yet it is so alert. And when you find for the first time, there are moments when you can look upon something, perhaps some in nature, perhaps it is a tree, a flower, you perceive it, and it is not being labeled by the mind. That is the arising of thoughtless awareness.

There is a knowing in that, but it is very different from what the thinking mind calls knowing, and you haven't lost the labels. If a label should be needed, it's there, but it's no longer absorbing all your attention, the conceptualized world of labels. So, so far humans have lived not only in a conceptualized sense of self in the head, but the moment you live in a conceptualized sense of self in the head, you inhabit a conceptualized reality.

In other words, whatever you come into contact with is immediately made into mental concepts, it is immediately judged, interpreted, and labeled according to the conditioning of the conceptualized mind, and the self that is in here, the me. So people go through life, every situation, they immediately interpret it, judge it, classify it, comment on it internally, often complain about it, dislike it. And this is called intelligence.

And at school, the children who are very quick to label things, they are called the good pupils. The best pupils are the ones who can immediately come up with an answer and can retain information and spit it out quickly. Best student in class, the hand goes up always immediately.

I have the answer. And then you have others who are slower, and the teacher asks the question, and those are the children in whom this new consciousness often is already arising. And there is not an immediate label there, because the question is actually quite deep, and so it falls into the depths.

And the pupil or the student just looks. And then the teacher says, okay, you don't know, obviously. And it's often, even Einstein was not very good at school.

There was too much depth. He couldn't immediately produce good results in exams. So that's the amazing thing, which to the mind looks not important.

How is that going to solve my problems? You look at a flower, you look at a tree, you look at the sky or anything, and the perception arises in a field of alert stillness. It doesn't matter how long, it's a timeless moment now.

And maybe after three seconds of clock time, the mind may come in and say, this is a beautiful flower. But for three seconds, four seconds, five seconds, maybe much more. So, the sense perception happened within a field of still and alert presence.

And maybe even the mind may come in after that and say, oh, I just perceived the flower in complete stillness. Which is mental noise, of course. But it is after that, the mind may

come in different ways and claim and say something, or it may be very uneasy.

The mind may suddenly come up with a huge amount of noise because it's frightened of that state of stillness, because it thinks it's out of control now. I am not controlling the universe anymore. If I don't interpret and judge every moment, how do I figure out what this thing is all about, this moment?

And the amazing thing is, more often than not, you don't need to figure out what this is all about. You just need to look in the same way that the artist looks at a canvas in the state of that intense presence. You look at a situation and not attempting to figure it out.

That is habitual, of course. So the ability arises, at first you see it when you're in little perceptions and it's not being labeled. There's a spaciousness suddenly that is there.

And what that means is the world around you that before was a conceptualized reality, because you imposed mental labels on everything immediately, which deadened the world around you. People don't realize how dead the universe that they inhabit has become through immediate and compulsive mental labeling. All you relate to then is the labels.

You mistake the labels for what's there. On a simple level, you mistake, if that's a lily, I'm not sure, the label lily, you think you know what it is. What is this?

Oh, it's a lily. That's the end of it. But there is such, the mystery that is there, the incredible beauty and depth that is there, is gone completely because you've labeled it.

But if you allow the perception to arise in the field of stillness, it suddenly comes to life. It has a depth to it and a beauty and even a sacredness, which before, completely unaware of. And the entire universe, you realize, is an alive organism that humans have deadened, well, to themselves.

As far as they are concerned, the world is a dead place. So when you begin to allow perceptions to arise without compulsive labeling, the world comes alive again. There's a depth to everything and a mystery.

You don't fall into the delusion that when you have a little sound about something, then you know what it is. Lily. Or even worse with human beings.

When you have a little set of judgments about a human being, then you think you know who that human being is. And the depth, aliveness, and sacredness that is there in every human being, it's gone totally. It's not there for you.

All you know is that, oh, he is a such and such, she is a such and such, and this is what she did and said, and this is how she always is, and a few gone. All you know is you've said a little bit about the conditioning of that person and a lot about your own

conditioning. That's all.

It was partly a projection of your own conditioning and partly, perhaps, a seeing of the conditioning of that person, if you're lucky. And so you reduce human beings to absurd caricatures by imposing a set of labels and think that people even do it to their partners. They don't see the partner anymore, just the opinion, now the labels that they have, that's how she is.

And that's human relations are so problematic, conflict-ridden, because there are no human relations. There are conditioned mind entities relating to each other, but the being of the human being is obscured by the labeling. The being isn't there, just minds interacting.

So at first you walk, nature can be a great help as you enter that state of aware presence. You walk through nature or you sit somewhere and simply watch for a while. Now this is very much like a one-year-old baby would watch the world, the baby that hasn't accumulated the labels yet in the mind.

There's a small stage when the baby is aware of surroundings, but has not yet accumulated the necessary labels to interpret the surroundings. So it hasn't even started to ask, what's this, what's this, what's this yet? Because that's the mind.

It simply looks. And some babies, you can see it very clearly, there's enormous consciousness light shining through their eyes, enormous love and joy looking through their eyes at you. And you know they're not saying anything in their heads about you.

They have no opinion about you. There's true communication, true communion as they look. And some humans can sense that, so they feel drawn to that baby and they don't want to leave.

They might make funny noises or something, but the baby doesn't really need that. But they feel drawn to the baby because there's almost a self-recognition there. And that is the destiny of humans, to re-enter that state.

But when they re-enter that state, it will have an added knowing to it because they have moved through the stage of mind and thought. Humanity as a whole has moved through that evolutionary cycle that is identification with thought. A long, long, long cycle for humanity.

And it's been tough. It's been tough on humans, as particularly in the later stages when, in the later stages of any evolutionary cycle, it is that cycle, that state that is in that cycle displays increasing dysfunction. So it's been tough for humans and even more tough for the planet as humans are moving into greater and greater dysfunction because the cycle of identification with thought is coming to an end and a thought-based self is coming to an end.

The planet is suffering greatly from human madness because we really need to call it now madness. Nothing wrong, it's not saying that shouldn't be happening. It is right for humans to be mad at this moment.

But we need to see it also as madness that is also right. The caterpillar becomes a butterfly. In the final stage of the caterpillar's life, the caterpillar becomes dysfunctional as a caterpillar.

It doesn't work anymore. Humans now have become dysfunctional on the planet. It's not working anymore.

We are destroying ourselves and the planet. Yes, this is the end of the evolutionary cycle. That's why it's mad.

Not that it shouldn't be happening. This is within the totality. It could not be otherwise.

But part of this is to see that it is mad, not condemning it as bad and shouldn't be happening, but to see it. And the seeing is already the beginning of liberation. Because that which sees the conditioned and its dysfunction is the arising of the unconditioned consciousness.

And so increasingly there's the ability to witness your own mind. And then there's the ability to dwell in the gaps. One thought comes to an end, no other thought has started.

There's a gap of still presence. And in that gap, there's great intelligence at work. This could be a very passive state, you're sitting on a park bench, simply looking in amazement at the beauty of all these forms all around you.

And then it exists as a dynamic state, which arises whenever you are confronted with a challenge. And life tends to do that. It doesn't leave you alone for too long.

And up comes another challenge, some situation. And instead of being drawn back into the old reaction, the conditioned reaction, the old resistance pattern, instead of that, you meet the challenge through alert presence, stillness, allow it to be. And there is a flow, one could say, a current of awareness flows through this form into the situation that is the challenge.

And this is an amazing thing, the arising of this ability to simply look, to simply give attention. So what then flows through you, one could say, all words are limited, so take that into consideration. They're all approximations.

One could say, what flows through you is, or what arises, a field of attention. And that is the expression of unconditioned intelligence. And any situation that you face fully in that way, because the old reaction never faces the situation fully.

It denies it, runs away from it. It never faces this moment fully, which is the only place

where a challenge can arise. And in that way, it is faced immediately, and intelligent action, if action should be needed, arises.

Or no action may arise, and the intelligence that you are now aligned with, the one intelligence, acts upon the situation from some external point. In other words, here's the challenge, attention flows, you allow the prerequisite for the current of awareness to flow into a situation. The prerequisite for that is that you allow this moment to be, because you have given up arguing with what is.

You have seen that is already is. Whatever is, is. Not that it cannot be changed, but at this moment, it is as it is.

Not only that, it also could not be otherwise. If it is, it couldn't be otherwise. Because the tiniest we separate events and say this is a separate event, this is a separate situation, nothing is separate.

Every event happens within the totality of the entire cosmos. It is a web of interconnectedness with which every seemingly separate event is connected. Whatever happens is totally connected with everything else.

So how could it not, it couldn't be otherwise for that reason. So it is madness to argue internally with the suchness of now. And that is, of course, to argue internally with the suchness of now is the normal human state of dysfunction.

And they think this is how they are going to change the world. The opposite is true. This is how the world remains the same in its dysfunction.

So the shift now is you see the futility of arguing with the suchness of now, no matter what form it takes. And then you allow the suchness of now to be as it is, which is not a state of passivity, but dynamic. You allow it.

Now, certain situations, it is enough to allow the situation. Other situations require action, intelligent action. And the one intelligence that is greater than the human mind, the unconditioned, operates.

And it may operate as an external event that suddenly changes the situation, a coincidence, a factor that comes in that meets the needs of this moment just right. And perhaps you did nothing. In some cases, you just sit there and watch.

In some cases, no immediate action is possible. There are situations, the challenge is there, but there's not yet anything I can do. So it's simply allowed and you continue.

The outflow of awareness simply is there. And then when action becomes possible or necessary, it happens either through you or through an external factor, or the situation changes by itself. And this is amazing realization that in this way, problems do not arise

anymore in your life.

Because problems is to mentally dwell on challenges that either are not even here, that might arise, or challenges that at this time you cannot do anything about. And then you play around with thought in circles, round and round and round about these situations. And that's a problem.

Now you have a problem. And now, in its madness, the mind-based self likes that. It doesn't say that openly, but it can increase its sense of self, you can enhance, it can enhance its sense of self, because now it has serious problems.

So I must be important. This is the underlying assumption. And I like, therefore, I like to think about how important my problems are.

And so you get totally absorbed by your life situation, by the story in the head. And this is the state that I described as the state of absence. You're gone.

Dream world in the head. Thinking you're taking responsibility for your life by worrying and lying awake at night, thinking about what the future holds for you, and what the future might do to you, or what the future might withhold from you. And it's, so that's, oh my God, this is how humans live.

This is the normal, the normal way to live. And of course, by the way, normal these days means insane. And so the root of dysfunction is in oneself.

Where else could you really find it? And the transformation of the world is in yourself. Out of that transformed consciousness comes a transformed world.

Because we know one good thing that has come out of physics, apart from the atom bomb and the chemical warfare, or whatever they do, hydrogen bomb, and a good thing that has come out of it is they have seen the interconnectedness between the observing consciousness and that which is being observed. A change in perspective changes what you're observing. And that was an amazing realization that came out of modern physics that has enormous repercussions.

And you can see how the world, what we experience as the world, in reality, now I'm talking about especially the so-called man-made world, human-made world. And what we really experience, what you experience when you switch on your TV or in your interact, the world, whatever you experience as the world, is basically your state of consciousness. So, and it's collective, it's not a personal, nobody to blame for anything.

It's a collective human condition. We have created this world. It is not entirely mad.

There are redeeming features to it. If it were entirely mad, it would already have self-destructed. It got very close in the latter, in the last century, it already got very close

several times to self-destruction in its madness.

And it is still close. We are not free yet from the possibility of self-destruction, although the new state is arising. The only question is, is it arising fast enough?

Is it arising on a wide enough scale to compensate for the increasing madness of the old egoic consciousness and what it's doing to the planet and to human beings, to themselves, what they are doing to themselves? The fact that we are here is a good sign. This is the arising of the new.

So, I don't make any predictions because I don't know whether humanity is going to make it. Ultimately, of course, it doesn't matter. The universe is infinitely abundant in the life forms that it manifests.

The one intelligence manifesting has so many life forms. And many life forms, after a while, the one consciousness says, okay, that's enough. I'm withdrawing from there.

And it's gone. And then it flows into something else. And maybe it flowers through this form.

I know that it wants to flower through the human form. And there's no predicting what the world will look like once human consciousness has flowered collectively. There's no point in even speculating, be it enough to say that you wouldn't even recognize the planet.

It would look like some strange, perhaps heavenly realm. And if you went there with an ego, you would feel very uncomfortable. Oh, I need to get back to the old earth.

So that it is a great challenge and a great adventure and a great opportunity life at this time. Not that you are separate from the consciousness. You are an expression of the one consciousness.

The question is, is that one consciousness now going to move through you? Is the cosmic evolutionary impulse finding a sufficiently clear space here so that it can move in and move through and then emanate through this form? Some people will create wonderful things.

Others will simply emanate the state of joy, peace, aliveness, and love and walk through the world emanating that state and be a blessing to whoever they meet. That's quite enough, isn't it? And others may create great things.

Others will say, I don't need to create anything. It's simply to embody that state. That's the flowering, as I mentioned before, somewhere, maybe in the book, I can't remember.

The planet, there was plant life on the planet for millions of years, they say, before there ever was a flower. After millions of years of plant life, I'm told, one day the first flower

must have opened. And when a plant becomes a flower, it's an analogy, as I'm using it here, for a new level of, a new dimension of being, of consciousness.

But what is happening to humans is much vaster than even that. But it's a beautiful analogy. And then it took thousands of years before another flower came, probably, and then two or three.

And then suddenly a profusion of flowers all over the planet. And this is very similar. We've had early flowers in humanity.

The great teachers of humanity, one can look upon them as early flowerings of human consciousness. The possibilities that are inherent in the human form for the first time express themselves fully through those great teachers, sages, only some of whom we know about. Some were relatively unknown.

So there were rare flowers here and there. And then a time comes when we are ready for the flowering on a much larger scale. And it cannot not be now, otherwise it's the end.

So it must be now. This is the time. It goes far beyond anything personal in your life.

On a personal level, it's very pleasant because it frees you from inhabiting an absurdly complex world of problem-making. That's great. So on a personal level, it takes the weight off you, the weight of the self, the mind-made self that already the Buddha, the early flower that he was, recognized.

A profound insight too early, probably for much too early for his time, to see the illusion of self that was the primordial insight of the Buddha. My God, he saw that. And so that's where it flowered.

As one Buddhist monk who was asked to explain the meaning of Buddhism simply said, the meaning of Buddhism is this, no self, no problem. Finished. Oh, yes, but I'd like to learn some philosophy.

Can you teach me? I have plenty of time. Please give me time, says the self.

I want to complete myself in time. So the burden of self, of that delusion, you don't walk around with that heaviness anymore, because that's a heavy, you'll become a heaviness on the planet. And whatever you walk on, you crush.

A heavy self walking, millions of heavy selves walking on the planet, crushing life. And they don't even know it. Life?

What's life? It's just a little something, says the mind. This is timber, it's worth six million dollars, I would say.

Okay, we can cut that in no time. And it's gone. A forest that was there for 100,000

years, where a field of sacredness, but the mind can't see it because the mind labeled it.

And that's nobody's fault. It's the human dysfunction. So the heaviness of self, the heaviness of self leaves you.

Oh, free of that delusion, that entity that was so hard to live with, the me that I had such a problematic relationship with. And now, there's simply, where there was a heavy me, there's a field of aware presence, walking, sitting, moving, being. It doesn't make problems anymore for itself, for other humans, for the planet.

It doesn't create suffering anymore for itself, for other humans, for the planet. Oh, and so this is why, since ancient times, they've used the word liberation to talk about this shift in consciousness, because all the ancient teachings, they point to it, and they sometimes call it liberation. From what?

Even in the New Testament, they use that expression. Free. Jesus talks about, you will be free.

You will know the truth. The truth will make you free. Free, they said, we're already free.

We are nobody's slaves. And Jesus said, no, you're not. And he used the language that he used at the time.

He said, you are the slaves of sin. Now, what's sin? If he were talking nowadays, he would have said, you're totally conditioned entities, and you're completely unconscious.

You're the slaves of your conditioning. That's all. It's the dysfunction that is sin.

No more. It's nobody's fault. It's the original sin, which is the collective dysfunction.

That's all. It's not the way in which it's usually interpreted, but there's a truth in it, a deep truth. And just as there's original sin, there's original innocence, which is the sanity in you, which is the unconditioned consciousness in you, that's far vaster than the little original sin, far vaster.

The little original sin is a little illusion. It only appears big when you are totally trapped in it. So this is the liberation already happening.

And as you walk away from here, you will have lost some weight. Not physical weight. That doesn't matter.

But the weight of me. Myself. The problem making me.

If this were not already happening here, you would not have been able to sit here for an hour and a half, according to clock time. It would have become unbearable. Or you had to exert such willpower that you made yourself sit here, but that's unlikely.

So the greatest adventure that any human being can be involved in, you are involved. And some people are still asking about their life purpose. That is your life purpose.

To embody this transformation. That's your primary life purpose. Nothing else matters.

Your secondary life purpose then is what form your external life takes as you embody this transformation. But you don't really need to do a lot of thinking about that. Because that looks after itself.

Thank you. Being here without expectancy, without a need for future, the psychological need. Is it possible to be here completely, where your field of attention is not being, right now, filled up with anything?

Unless there's a lot of mental noise in your head as you sit here, in which case the stream of thought is filling up that space of now. And it's a strange thing to become aware of the space of now without needing to fill it up with something. But if it's already filled up with mental noise, then you can at least see that and accept that.

And in that seeing and in that accepting, there is a space even around the mental noise. And there's some spaciousness there even with a noisy mind. So the little secret is, when you become aligned with this moment, now, no matter what's going on, there is space.

In that acceptance of what is, you go beyond what is. In the non-acceptance of what is, you remain stuck with what is. Although you could remove yourself to some other place, and the same stuckness condition would arise very quickly.

Stuck again. So one could say, although all words are limited, there's object consciousness. That's the normal state for most human beings.

They're identified with objects in their consciousness. Thought streams, emotions, sense perceptions. Some they like, some they dislike.

And then there is space consciousness. This is just a temporary perspective on it. And most humans don't know that yet.

Some stumble upon this accidentally almost, and are astonished. Space consciousness, what is that? It's, first of all, space consciousness arises at this very moment, as you sit here and pay attention to the words, that's object consciousness, words arise in your consciousness as temporary forms.

Same as your own thoughts, not much difference. But you also pay attention, and this is unusual for many people, to the silent spaces between the words. Paying attention simply means, one could say, to listen, to the silence that isn't part of this talk, if it's a talk.

They're just words, it's not really a talk. And that's a strange thing, at first it seems

pointless, or the mind says, listen to the silent spaces. Well, that's not very interesting.

No, of course it's not interesting. Only object consciousness is interesting, because every object is so fascinating. Oh, look at that.

And every object you have some relationship with, react to. But what relationship could you have with space? And it certainly isn't interesting as such.

Interesting means it's feeding the need of the mind to add more content, more objects. Because the mind wants always more, it's the egoic mind, the self, mind made self. And space consciousness is nothing that you could add, because there seems to be nothing there.

So you pay attention to the silent spaces between words, sentences, and not only that, but also you simply pay attention, or one could say, listen, acknowledge that there is, that one could say there are two dimensions to this talk, the words, and the field, the space, the silence. Usually in a talk, people come to listen to the words, to take in new information, more of something. And here you're being invited, yes, to listen to the words, but it's being pointed out that there is a deeper dimension that mostly people would be unconscious of unless it's pointed out or they find it accidentally.

There is an underlying field, how the words couldn't even exist without the space, the stillness. Certain kinds of music can do the same. Music where stillness is an important element, and usually even there, people are not directly conscious of it, they only sense it is so deep and beautiful and sacred, and they still believe it's in the sounds.

But what really is the depth of that music lies in the ground out of which the sounds come. And the sounds point to that, and that's called very deeply spiritual kinds of music, because as you listen, something shifts inside you. Particularly if you bring conscious attention to the underlying ground, that shift happens to you the moment you pay attention to the field of stillness.

That moment is the arising of that field of stillness in you. Because with thought, you cannot listen to silence. With thought, the thinking mind, you can only listen to words or notes, sounds, but not silence.

The moment you tune into silence, silence or stillness arises in you. The moment you begin to listen to it, a dimension arises in you that we could call space consciousness, unconditioned consciousness, as it arises as a field of alert presence. And the objects are still there in consciousness, the sounds of the music, or in this case, the words.

But just as in those types of music, the sounds point beyond themselves, just as these words are not saying, listen to me, this is important. The words are not important, because they point beyond themselves. So the words have no self-importance.

They are quite unimportant, because we are here not for that. You have enough of object consciousness, the whole world is immersed in it. You have enough information, bombarded by information.

Do you need more? No. And a similar thing in certain types of painting, Eastern paintings, you have a landscape with a little tree down here, a rock, and a bird maybe flying just at the top of the painting across, and 85% of the painting is empty space.

And so from a mind perspective, this is not a significant painting, because there isn't very much there. Is that all? Couldn't he have done a little bit more to fill this canvas or the paper?

And that type of painting doesn't say, look at me, how great I am. Look at how, even the artist doesn't say, look what I can do. The artist denies him or herself, and the painting denies itself as something, because it's all pointing to something deeper than form.

And so a strange thing happens when you acknowledge that dimension in your life, and if you don't know that dimension, you don't know the most important thing there is, being itself, the ground itself, the essence of who you are. You go through your whole life immersed and identified with, and having a problematic relationship with object consciousness. And every object that arises in consciousness matters so much, and it has something to do with you.

You need it or you want to push it away. So, in other words, all you know is the world, all you know is this dimension of stuff, material stuff, mind stuff. All you know is that, and you go around battling with the stuff of this world, and you get tired after a while.

More stuff, there's only more stuff coming, all that you can gain here is more stuff, or lose the stuff that you've accumulated as the content of your mind, and then suffer, because it's painful to die as that illusion. So notice as you sit here, if there is a restlessness in you at this moment, maybe you're not even hearing what I'm saying, it could be that restless, that is, you're immersed in object consciousness thoughts, and it's frustrating, because nothing is being given to add to that. And then you can notice that, oh, oh, there's it, there it is.

And you acknowledge that. And suddenly you become conscious of the silent spaces. You listen to the silent spaces.

And for that, to be able to do that, a certain alertness is required. And a strange thing happens, as you listen to silence, and it may never be there for long, thought ceases, comes to a stop, because you cannot listen to silence with thought. You don't have to stop your mind, just listen to silence.

That's it. And the moment thought resumes, you're no longer listening to the silence. And it is good to live in that way, the two dimensions, the essence dimension, space

consciousness, the dimension, one could say, of the absolute, and the dimension of the relative, in which you move in this world, as a physical body.

Interact with all these different forms, and then there is a balance in your life. For most people, all they have is the world, the stuff. And they are lost in it, they are lost in it, and trying to find themselves in and through it, for which they need future.

So our gathering here isn't really a lecture, a talk, it's something else. We don't even have a name for it. But in India, where they've been at it for longer, there's the expression satsang, which perhaps could be translated as, in the company of being, to be with being, because this is being.

Existence is form. Being is prior to form. Being is the essence of who you are.

In the company, really it means, traditionally satsang means being in the company of the teacher. But the deeper meaning is being with yourself, not the mind made self. With the deeper essence of who you are.

So we, this, I sometimes call this a portal into that state of consciousness that is the state of presence, of awareness, pure thoughtless awareness. The state of awake, being awake. Thought arises again, yes, but as you dwell in that ground of no thought, thought loses its capacity to make you unhappy.

You're no longer totally identified with every thought. You recognize the relativity of thought. You recognize that no thought contains the entire truth.

You recognize that whatever thought you think is a tiny fragment. And in many cases, more often than not, the opposite thought is equally true. It's just a different perspective.

And many other perspectives are possible, and thought can then be contained. The polarities of thought, you're no longer identified with one polarity. If they could know this in certain, in many parts of the world where there is violent conflict, each part is identified with one perspective, one viewpoint.

There's no, this is the truth. We have the truth. Only our perspective is true.

To see the relativity of thought, and whatever thought you have about yourself, it's not it. And so you can have a relationship with thought that is a little bit loose, and you stand back and say, okay, here goes another thought that's telling me that you can't make it, you're not good enough, whatever it says. Or you're, if only the world would recognize how great you are.

Whatever thought, and it's recognized as thought. You don't totally believe in every thought anymore, because it's conditioned. Other thoughts arise as you inhabit, as you dwell, are rooted in being.

Increasingly, thoughts arise that are very different from the conditioned mind activity. Those are thoughts of greater power. Those are also thoughts that can create, manifest, the famous, in new age, many people are interested in manifesting through thought.

And of course, everybody's doing it already. Everybody's manifesting whatever their world is through thought. Mostly it's unconscious.

But there's no point in dwelling on the possibilities that are inherent in thought, as far as external manifestation is concerned, unless you have gone through the shift in consciousness, so that you are not trying to manifest as a dissatisfied, little, egoic entity. And through your manifestation, trying to complete yourself or make yourself happy through this or that, that won't work. So it is primary to allow the shift in consciousness to happen, so that you recognize yourself as not what you thought you were, as the illusion of me and my story which needs to complete itself, and then desperately tries to manifest something, perhaps succeeds.

Of course, it works quite often, and then for a little while it's great, and then that doesn't fulfill its purpose either. Later, as this arises, you don't need to be concerned anymore with how to manifest, because you become then a powerful manifestor, if that's a word. But it flows from the depths of your being.

That which is manifesting your reality then is not the little, egoic entity, but the one intelligence which is flowering through you, and that suddenly thoughts come that you couldn't even have thought before as an egoic entity. And then manifestation happens through you, and it's beautiful. So thought is powerful, and whatever you manifest in thought, through thought externally, will pertain to the world of external forms which come and go.

Nothing lasts forever. That remains. And that's fine.

So here we are not focusing on how to manifest, but on something more vital. How to be yourself first. Finding the portals into the unconditioned state of consciousness, then that operates.

And here is one portal, and that portal is listening to the space, the silence. And then being aware of that which comes up the objects at the same time. As God is defined in one of the Upanishads, as it's not that which you see, but that which makes all seeing possible.

It's not that which you hear, it's that all hearing possible. It's not what you think, it's that which makes all thought possible. So this stillness, we could say, that is here as external silence, which is inner stillness, is the greatest mystery.

Enormous depths in that. And Buddhists, so that you cannot make it into another mind object, call it emptiness. And that's very clever.

If you call it fullness, which is equally true, then it's easier for the mind to say there is something there. It becomes a mind object. I believe in fullness, but it's much harder to say, I believe in emptiness, because that means you believe in nothing.

So this is a portal, and it's an important one which you can use to access that state of consciousness. It's a simple fact. And outer silence helps initially with that practice, because there is something you can actually listen to the silence.

Out in nature, there will be a few sounds, but underlying the beautiful sounds that you hear in nature, there will be this vast realm of stillness in which these sounds appear. And it is that which gives people that, even if they are not conscious of it directly, they sense a depth, a beauty beyond the forms which are beautiful, but a depth to nature and a sacredness that they can't define. What is it that makes this so sacred and beautiful?

Yes, the forms, each flower, but there's even more, there's something that is beyond the forms that gives it its sacredness. And yes, it is the underlying field. And so when you walk in nature, also you can be in both worlds, so to speak, or rather in the world and in being.

As you listen, you walk around listening to the sounds and to the underlying stillness. Alertness is required for that. No tension, just a relaxed alertness.

It arises spontaneously as you listen, and there's a depth, and so already you are walking through nature in the state of thoughtless presence, awareness. Wow! And then suddenly a thought comes in, it's no longer a problem, it's just a thought, it comes in and another, and space is in between.

And as you walk in that state, you're no longer, your history becomes unimportant, your past and future, even your name and the story of me recedes. And instead what arises is the field of unconditioned consciousness. And nature is helpful because nature does not stimulate thought.

A city where everything is human-made is more likely to stimulate mind activity because the city is created by the human mind. It's the externalised mind. The noise of the city is the externalised mental noise.

And never have humans lived in a more noisy civilisation. Maybe one day this civilisation will be called the noisy civilisation. And of course the poisonous civilisation also, it creates an enormous amount of noise.

It's an externalisation of the increasing mental noise. So they create a very noisy world, and they're looking for new means of making more noise. And they have to fill up every space with noise.

I don't know how it is here, but in North America, finding a restaurant without loud music

is almost impossible these days. You have to look very hard and you open the door, put in your head and it goes, and walk out again. And noise is of course, something is happening, objects arising.

Right. So nature does not stimulate thought. Of course it doesn't mean that thought doesn't arise.

Most humans, when they go into nature, are full of thought. And peripherally they see for a little while, oh that's a beautiful flower, and then the mind goes about their problems, and then they look again. There's a moment of recognition of beauty.

If they could catch that moment, there's a looking, but the navel hasn't come up yet. There's a fragment, there's a little space when they look at this flower. At first you glance at the tree or the sky.

And in many humans, that gap is for one second, two seconds. Or if you deepen, three seconds, four seconds. And if you deepen even more, ten, twenty.

And then already you are walking or standing in awe of, and then perhaps a thought may come. Beautiful. But many humans only have that as a gap of one second, two seconds, and immediately thought comes.

And that is the veil that descends between that. It's a conceptualized veil. Now, everything in nature exists in the state of no thought.

Intelligence manifests through all these forms. All these forms are the manifestation of this one intelligence. And they are beautiful, but it is prior to thought.

There was no committee meeting that said, let's work out how we can create a beautiful flower. Let's think, a think tank. Let's, okay, let's draw our plans.

Let's put data into the computer. And then after a thousand hours of thinking, you still couldn't create a rose. And but the rose didn't come out of thought.

It came out of stillness. The tree came out of stillness, grows in stillness. Timeless also.

And the entire universe is very, very still. No sound in outer space. Only in science fiction movies.

Just to give the impression that something is happening, because nobody could stand watching that silence. But there's no sound. A whole galaxy could explode, which would take millions of years.

It wouldn't make a single sound. And a whole galaxies are born out of complete stillness. And there is an intelligence at work in that stillness.

The one intelligence. Even the human mind has come out of it, it has a little experiment in noise. It's fine.

And the monkeys also, a few experiments with noise. Monkeys are very noisy. Very much like the human mind.

That's why Buddhists call the mind the monkey mind. And so to use as a portal, silence and listening to silence in nature or at home, anywhere, right here. The silence here, the stillness, is the true teacher, one could say, because it is the arising of space consciousness, of the unconditioned consciousness.

So this is a powerful portal. And as you listen to that, then you realize it's not really caused by the external silence. It can arise anywhere, no matter whether in your external surroundings, there is a silent space or not.

Because there are situations in this noisy world, many places and situations, there's hardly ever a silent space. You're bombarded by noise and noise making, even in the office or at your workplace. In the family, always things going on.

Many families, we go there, there's two or three TVs on, children screaming, parents saying, get this done, do this, we're in a hurry. And now a beautiful thing, when you notice that the arising of stillness can happen by itself, the listening to silence is really the arising of inner stillness. And for that you don't really need, it's beautiful if you have the stillness outside and you use that as a portal.

But once you become familiar, so to speak, with that state, it can be there no matter where you are, as the simple arising of thoughtless awareness. And this brings us to another portal, very powerful one. It takes you into the same place, and that is a portal of acceptance of what is.

Takes you also into space consciousness. And this is interesting. Acceptance of what is, we spoke about it already, because it is, there's nothing you can do with is.

You can argue with it, but it's futile. Is is as it is at this moment. What can you do?

And so you accept. Or you don't accept. And if you don't accept, contraction arises.

The self gets strengthened, the illusion of the me in that non-acceptance, the boundary around me gets strengthened, so the sense of identity, the artificial, illusory sense of identity gets strengthened through the non-acceptance. This shouldn't be. And the noise-making of the mind becomes stronger when you deny what is.

Because if you watch the noise-making, the compulsive thought activity, a lot is to do with projecting yourself into a future moment. In other words, trying to get away from this one, to a more fulfilling one, a more complete, powerful, pleasurable one. So the

acceptance of what is, externally, then there's a stillness, a peace, and a stillness arises, no matter what the external condition is, if it is accepted internally, welcomed, the is-ness of it.

But if you can't do it, contraction arises. But if you are aware of that, the emotion that arises through non-acceptance, anger, sadness, you watch that, what do you do with that? It is as it is.

Then you accept that. And every time you accept on level one, you accept what is externally. So you do not create inner resistance.

You do not strengthen the illusory self through that. And a spaciousness arises around what is. If you miss that opportunity, resistance is there.

But suddenly you recognize that resistance is there, and you recognize the emotion that is arising in this situation, and instead of saying, oh, you see, you have failed again, you see, acceptance is totally pointless, you give up even trying to accept, you can't, you see, you're failing at this just as you failed at that. No. If you see it, it's enough.

There's the turbulence of the emotion. What do you do with that? It already is.

You allow it to be. And that suddenly, again, there is a space around the anger or the irritation, the tightness, through the yes. Let's say an irritating noise happens and you feel the irritation, you don't catch it quickly enough to say, well, there were children who were noisy before.

Irritation could arise and you don't catch it quickly enough, you've forgotten that this is the school and this is what children do. And so the mind says, it shouldn't be noisy here, we've come for spiritual talk. And so if you don't catch it soon enough, the irritation is there within a moment and it's accompanied by certain thoughts.

The thoughts are critical of this moment. And then suddenly you catch that and you say, hmm, you sense the irritation, you see the thought that goes with it, and then you say, well, there it is, there's the turbulence, let it be. What can you do?

You can't argue with it, it shouldn't be here, you have another problem on top of the irritation, you create the problem that you shouldn't be irritated with all the spiritual work you've done, you shouldn't be, by now you should be beyond this by now. But there it is. And so, oh, irritation.

And you simply, there's a flow of attention, you give it some attention, gentle flow of attention. And it is. And suddenly there's a space around the irritation.

It's still there, but it's being contained within a greater spaciousness. So in other words, you are now in touch with space consciousness. You know yourself ultimately as not that

which arises, but that which contains all that arises.

And you know yourself as that simply through accepting whatever arises, instead of battling with it. So the doorway, the portal into self-realisation is not some kind of needing to become something that you're not yet, and beating yourself up when you're not living up to certain ideas in your head that perhaps have been put there by teachings or reading books of how beings should behave, and I'm not there yet. That's not the enlightened being.

Nothing in form is beyond the polarities as this form, including enlightened entities, beings, they will express somewhere certain polarities in their life. They might like chocolate cake or whatever, or go to Starbucks and drink coffee, as I do sometimes. And then people say, you drink coffee?

You shouldn't be drinking coffee. Well, it's only two or three times a week. Well, you shouldn't be drinking coffee.

You should be beyond that. And then you can internalise that as a voice in your head. I haven't made it yet.

The state of perfection has not been reached yet. You can struggle for a long time with that. And then you see, that's not the way.

There's a much quicker way. And that quick way has no problems in it, and doesn't make yourself into a problem, or anybody else into a problem, or any situation into a problem that is to be overcome. The mind itself likes that, because then it can struggle and be in opposition to something, even itself.

It likes to be in conflict with itself. And so, the doorway into the state of perfection is acceptance of the is-ness, whether it be external, or if you miss it there, your second chance is interval. It is.

Then you are no longer completely caught up in what is, in a reactive relationship to what is. You become deeper, you already are, but then you know that you are deeper than what is. And you know yourself as the spaciousness around what is.

And the irritation no longer matters that much. It's a human energy formation, nothing personal in it. The personal nature goes out of emotions, saying, me, there's a me in every emotion, a self in every emotion otherwise.

It's my problem, this emotion is mine, it's part of my story. And then you realize it's a human emotion, your fear is not much different from any other person's fear, or anger, or sadness, or irritation. It is an energy turbulence or a heaviness.

So as you allow it, the self, the delusion of self goes out of it. It's only through non-

allowing that you strengthen the self nature of every feeling, every emotion, and thought, every thought. There's a self in it.

But then as you step back from the workings of the conditioned mind, you realize it's the human mind. And even that, it's not personal. The self that was in every thought is recognized as the Buddha did, as an illusion, an illusory entity.

And that arises now is self-realization. And it arises through seeing what you are not. Thoughts, emotions, events, sense perceptions, in other words, objects in consciousness.

There's no self there. The Buddhist doctrine, the Buddhist teaching of anatta, no self, of course. So who am I then?

I'm space, stillness, the ground, thoughtless, aware presence. In the absence of a spiritual teaching, all you have as a teacher is life, and the challenges of life, and what that is going to do to you sooner or later, it will take away objects that you have accumulated in your mind, in consciousness, and identified with as self. Loss.

Loss of possessions, loss of recognition, loss of people close to you, loss of physical abilities as you grow old. Or if you're lucky, before you grow old, you encounter some kind of disaster in your life, and you lose a lot all at once. Maybe your job, maybe your health at the same time, and your possessions, or someone close to you.

And it goes within a short space of time, it's all gone. Objects have like dissolved in front of your eyes that were me, part of me. And that is traditionally, and before there were ever any spiritual teachers or teachings, a few human beings realised who they were through sudden and great loss.

When objects that they had identified with in consciousness, content, was removed from them. The opposite of what the self, the mind-made self wanted and thought would get me to enlightenment, the opposite, because the mind-made self thinks in enlightenment, thinks of enlightenment in terms of more. Surely enlightenment is the greatest thing.

So it thinks of it in terms of something that I can add to myself as the attainment. And then suddenly life does something to you, and the opposite happens, not more, but less. Life takes things away.

Instead of giving you enlightenment, it takes away the little that you had, or the lot that you had, and so empty spaces appear where before there was something. And it's being torn out of you by life. Sometimes violent events can happen.

Life tears something from you, accidents, illness, whatever disaster. That's a powerful teacher. And so as it tears something from you, the opposite of what the self had been, because it had been planning a good outcome to its story.

I was planning a happy ending for my story, and now this has happened. It's destroyed everything, the whole script. I don't think I can put it back together again, or I have to rewrite the whole thing.

And so suddenly empty spaces appear where before there was something, now there is nothing. Before there was recognition of you as someone important, the world thought a lot of you, then you lose your position or your reputation through some scandal, maybe you did something silly, and now everybody thinks you're nothing, they don't even talk about you anymore. So that's an empty space.

A content, a mental image is gone, it's not fat anymore, it can't sustain itself. And then you lose your house, and then your wife leaves you, and then somebody very close to you dies, and then the stock market crashes. And before you know it, there's mostly empty spaces where before there was something, quite a lot.

And now two things are possible, an even more fearful and angry and bitter and resentful self-contraction of the egoic entity that now quickly rewrites the story and gets identified with that, and then the story says, I'm the most miserable of all beings, I have failed at everything, life has treated me unfairly, and that becomes a new story, which is what you're telling yourself in the head or telling to others. Before it looked like a great story, but now it's quickly rewritten, so that you can identify with a new conceptualised sense of self, and that is a very bitter and resentful one, and exists in a continuous state of contraction.

But at least you know who you are. Instead of allowing the empty spaces, you quickly fill them up with new concepts. Now this is of course an unhappy story, but it is far better to the self than no story at all that you can tell yourself and others.

So it's all been in vain, 30 years of work, all for nothing, they've all let me down, it's pointless, and then you have a lot to say about it. And you have a new sense of self arising out of that, and then you die. But there's a potential, on the other hand, that you don't run away from the empty spaces, and you may be so stunned by the empty spaces appearing suddenly, where before there was something, now there is nothing, that you just sit there, stunned, and look, and somehow you say, what can I do?

It's all gone. And you may suddenly laugh, and not realise, perhaps you don't have a word for it, that you have suddenly and spontaneously entered the surrendered state of consciousness. And the space, all these empty spaces where before there was something, through these holes in your life, space consciousness emerges.

There was the BMW, now there's a hole, and through it comes, there was the big house, now there's nothing there, and it comes through there. There was the wife that was there, beautiful, attractive, you could show her off to everybody, and so feel bigger, and now she left you for another man, betrayed you, let you down, or whatever the story

says, and now there's nothing, she's gone, and what comes through is space, unconditioned, and suddenly you say, what's going on? I should be unhappy, and I feel so peaceful.

And you walk around in that state of amazement. You sit on a park bench, and no story is happening in your head anymore. Life is enough without a story.

Going through life without a story, except some memories, is fine, without the heaviness of a conceptualised identity. And you can notice, the conceptualised identity at times wants to reassert itself, and then you simply step into now, use a portal into now, because the conceptualised identity functions only through thought, and thought functions only through past and future. So there may be some of you here who have already experienced what I just talked about, life taking things away from you, and so that, the arising of that which is unconditioned is through the openings that is already happening.

And if that hadn't happened to you, you wouldn't be here. You would be happy watching TV now. You would be happy in your unhappiness of being asleep, and identified with the story of me, which seems to still be, it's still working, still hoping it's going to work out, and suddenly.

So grace comes in many ways into your life, not only in ways that are usually easily recognised as grace, grace comes in ways that you would never call grace until you realise what it is. There was a film made about the life of Ram Dass, a spiritual teacher who suffered a stroke, and the title of that film is Fierce Grace. Fierce is...

and so sometimes it happens that grace comes into your life in strange ways, that only afterwards you recognise as grace, such as loss, great loss. And loss is grace. Death is grace.

Because every loss is a form of death, loss of something that you had identified with as content of the mind, of me. That is a death, and that is grace. And that is, the mind calls it awful, dreadful, shouldn't be happening, but it happens all the time.

Now, a spiritual teaching, when you realise how this transformation operates, then the spiritual teaching comes into your life and you are suddenly opened. And then grace operates in that way, much more gentle. Grace is here, but it's more gentle than the fierce grace.

It's both grace. Maybe you already had the fierce. Maybe you'll get the fierce as the last thing you need to enter the surrendered state.

Maybe you don't need it anymore, because as we sit here, that which other people lose through loss, we voluntarily lose here because we recognise that ultimately it's an illusion. And that is also grace. And so, as it has been said in a holy book, die before you

die.

That's how it's translated. Sometimes translated also as, find death before death finds you, because death will find you. Forms dissolve.

And now, here, you are finding death before it finds you, and realise only forms dissolve, and there's that which is beyond birth and death. Perhaps not even that, because that's already a mental formulation. It may be enough to realise the peace that is here now, as you no longer oppose this moment.

And that peace is beyond words, that spaciousness is beyond words and concepts. But it frees you from fear. It frees you from the illusory self.

And some humans have then said, I now know that there is no death. Well, that's one way of putting it. But no belief is required here.

So bring that yes to now, no matter what the now contains. It could not be otherwise. It's one with the totality, the form of this now.

Opposing it is madness. And then change happens out of that. This is good to know that no matter what happens to you, nothing can really stop you any more, because it's all as it should be.

Whatever condition rises, is as it is. And the yes to it will take you into that deep peace that comes with the realising the spaciousness around phenomena. You can give attention to the sound, listen to the sound, and listen particularly to the point where the sound begins to dissolve, and what's left is just the field of attention, the presence, the awareness.

In some teachings it's called the I am that is listening. So we have an object in consciousness, the sound, and consciousness as the ground that remains. And you can be aware both as you listen to the sound of the sound, and strangely enough, you can be aware of the awareness that is listening, the listening presence at the same time.

And we could call that awareness of awareness, not awareness of something in awareness, awareness of awareness, self-aware. This is an enormous shift in consciousness. I am that.

I am that. That is the one presence, the one fundamental identity of all things is the I am presence, the one consciousness. And so we have the beautiful phrase in the Bible somewhere when God defines him, her, itself as, I am that I am.

I am that. So that's the end of believing that I am this, or I am that, because every this and that is the beginning of a story, is the beginning of identification with some kind of form. In other words, it's the beginning of the dream, the dream of form, the dream of

me being that form.

And so you realize the essence of I am is never I am this or that, because this or that is always form and it's a story that starts with a form. But simply, the eternal I am presence, eternal means timeless. There's no time in that consciousness, because it's not object consciousness.

Time operates in the world of objects. There can be no world of objects without time. Time has no existence as such.

It's created by the mind in order to create a world of forms. You could not even imagine a world of form without time. So time is in the structure of the human mind to create a universe, to project that, and that's fine on its own level.

But if who you are gets caught up in that world of relativity and polarity, then that is the state of ignorance. Knowing God, I don't use that word very often, is knowing I am as the essence. It's so simple.

And that is the one thing that everybody knows that there's something so precious in me, and I don't want to lose that. The essence of one's identity that gets mixed up with a story, that gets mixed up with form, is presence, is awareness, is the I am. After we have taken a little break, because the physical bodies need things like breaks, we will look at something that is a great obstacle for many people to the arising presence and that is the human pain body and how the pain body also can become, one could say, a portal instead of being an obstacle.

Pain body, as you know, is the accumulated past in every human being. Racial past, personal past, and there's a lot of heaviness in there. Another profound statement in the Bible that I quoted earlier, be still and know that I am God.

Be still and know. Be still means dwell in that state of no thought that is stillness. And know, so in that state of no thought, in that stillness, there is a deep knowing that I am God.

I am is one with the one. So in that little pointer, we have each word basically means the same. It's about being, be, stillness, knowing, the knowing that is beyond mind, beyond concepts, I am God, not as a new form identity.

So we are coming to know the meaning of consciousness without thought. To be awake means to be in the state of consciousness without thought. Not to be identified with thought is to be awake.

Portal into that state, we have seen listening to silence, acceptance of now as a portal into that state. And of course, the inner body is also a portal into that state, sensing the aliveness that is throughout your body. Now at first it may appear that that is an object

that arises in your awareness, and at first that may be the case, because you feel certain energy movements.

As you go deeper, you realize there's vast spaciousness in here. And you realize the spaciousness that is in here, that is alive, that's spacious, is one with who you are. So although at first it may appear that when we speak of body awareness, as if the body were an object that arises in your consciousness, as you go deeper in, you realize the space of consciousness that is the essence of what appears temporarily as a physical body.

So the body also can become a doorway, a portal into space consciousness. And then that aliveness, that spacious aliveness, as you go through this portal, is suddenly everywhere. It's not confined anymore to the space of this body.

But the entry point is into attention moving into body. And so as we sit here, we can have a generalized sense of aware presence, or awareness is throughout the body. We're sensing the aliveness that is in every cell.

Very subtle at first, it's not just in the background. It's also a beautiful anchor for presence. You may at times want to close your eyes and go very deep into that inner body, so that you then lose the mental image of the form of the body.

And then they're no longer different parts of the body, but just a one generalized sense of spacious presence. And that is beautiful. It quickly takes you out of the story in the head into the power of now.

And this portal of the inner body is of course a way of contacting, of not just contacting, but realizing the intelligence that is there in that spaciousness of the body. That intelligence that is already greater than the human mind. Intelligence that operates temporarily as a physical body.

Enormous, from the point of view of mind, enormously complex. It operates noiselessly, beautifully, with no thinking involved. Intelligence.

So it has been said in a holy book somewhere, God is closer to you than hands and feet. Or it's been said in the Koran, God is closer to you than your jugular vein, which is up here somewhere, one of the main veins in the body. Closer to you than hands and feet.

What's closer than hands and feet? So that means God must be very close to me. And so if God, he, she, it, is closer than hands and feet, it must be even deeper than that, than hands and feet are out here.

So it's inside that. And for thousands of years, humans have looked for God through thought, mental abstraction. And for a long time thought, it's out there somewhere.

And then one early astronomer who looked, used one of the first people to use a telescope, said, I've looked everywhere and I haven't seen God anywhere. Well, good, that's the beginning of the end of an illusion. So this is a portal that is always there, because the body, wherever you go, the body goes with you.

Shifting attention from noise-making in the head, and then you notice it, because it brings about, very quickly, makes you suffer one way or another. And then you notice it. And the moment you notice that basically you've lost the now and so you suffer, that noticing is the arising of presence.

But that can be obscured immediately after you notice it by the mind again, which then judges the noticing and says, you see, you can't do it. And it says, oh, I can't be present now, not now, I have no time for the now. Tomorrow I'll look at the now again.

But first I have to sort all these things out which are more important than now. So often you will find a thought telling you, you can't be in the body now, it's just too much on my mind. And then you recognise that as a thought, without believing in it.

It's a thought, because thought has a momentum and it wants to keep going. And it will bring up other thoughts to justify that you should be giving your complete attention to thought. Every thought could be considered a little entity, a form, a life form with a short lifespan, but it's there and the entity wants to proliferate and grow and remain in its form.

So the mind can be considered an entity too in itself, an energy field, an energy form, and it wants to stay in control. It doesn't want to make room. So it will bring up thoughts that tell you, no, you can't do it now, this is too much, I've just...

And then you recognise the thought, and then you say, there's a thought that I can't do it, and then you move your attention into the body.

[Speaker 2] (4:40:37 - 4:40:37)

Oh.

[Speaker 1] (4:40:40 - 5:40:11)

And you might feel the pull of thought wanting your attention back up in the head. And you just, there's no struggle, you can't struggle with the mind, you can just gently hold attention in the body. If only, even the hands is enough as an anchor, because then some of your attention moves into the body.

And even sensing the aliveness that is in your hands, when the mind is extremely restless, and maybe you cannot feel immediately any other part of the body, just that is the beginning of the doorway, the portal, you're touching it as you go into hands, and

then simply holding the feeling of hand, sensing that, so some of your attention is here, and the mind is slightly less active, it hasn't got all your attention anymore.

Now the mind will pretend, every thought pretends that it is, it matters, and you must believe me. Every thought wants to matter, to be important, and you have to believe it, thought about yourself, your relationship with your partner, thought about your partner, thought about, and you're in it every, and so to realise that at any time your attention from the stream of thought into presence, and a good doorway is the body, one of the portals. And simply holding attention in your hands helps.

And then attention gradually moves more into the body because you sense this is so alive. You may come across people in your daily life, maybe parents, friends, relatives, who are not yet ready to listen to the teaching of presence or acceptance of now, but many people are ready for such simple truths of sensing the body. And you can tell your father or grandfather or grandmother or uncle who is tortured by his mind, can't get out, has been telling the same stories for the past thirty years, and you can tell him, can you feel your hands?

What? And then the very just point out there is a possibility that you can feel an aliveness in the body. Just try it.

No, I can't feel a thing, I mean, leave me alone with that. You just try. No, I can't feel anything.

You can explain that the body contains intelligence. Most people can see that if you say that they couldn't control the functions of the body with their mind, so there must be some other intelligence at work. And then say, close your eyes, hold your right or left hand like this.

Is there any way you can find out whether your right hand is still there or not without opening your eyes, without touching anything? Can you know whether this hand is still there or not, you can ask. And if they do it, after a little while they say, well yes, I can feel it.

It's still there. So, there it is. So that question can take their attention, because if you only say move your attention into the body, they may not be able to do it if they have lived their whole life in the head.

But that little question, is there any way you can find out, how can you know whether your right hand is still there if you close your eyes and don't touch anything, and don't move it, and suddenly they feel it. Oh, yes. So this could be the beginning of something for somebody who is not yet ready for anything else, at least they can begin to move some, and then feel the benefit of that.

Okay, the portal is opening up, that portal is beginning to open. That's good. And then,

for yourself, to have some attention in here, so that the mind doesn't create stories again.

While you go, while you travel on a bus, dwell in the energy field of body, and watch the landscape go past you, the cityscape go past you, and simultaneously have attention in the inner energy field of body. And there is the state that we pointed to earlier, in which you are able to perceive without needing to label it, because you have an anchor now for staying present. So you are not at the mercy of the conditioned mind, which labels things compulsively.

So this is the anchor, and so you can then perceive with that freshness, newness, and aliveness that is there when you are not interpreting or labelling that which you are perceiving. So you sense the body, at this very moment you can sense a little bit the subtleness, the energy field, the energy in the inner body, and hear the words, and be aware of the totality of the room, without needing to label, because your attention is not exclusively in thought anymore, it's moved out of mind. And so to use that anchor, also in nature it may be helpful, sit somewhere on the beach, on a stone, on a bench, enter the body, and then look, and then listen.

Oh, it's so easy now to listen without the interference of thought, and to be in that alertness. So whenever you feel overwhelmed by mind, a quick way is shifting attention into the inner body. And don't believe the thought that tells you you can't do it, at least not now.

One could say you have the choice now to be present. That's an enormous choice. You have the choice to be identified with mind.

It doesn't look like a choice, because the mind pulls you in. So you have the choice to step out of that, and be present. You only have that choice, ultimately, because the totality with which you are intrinsically connected is moving through you.

Presence is arising through you, but from the point of view of this entity, from that perspective, and everything I say, every language, every thought is only a perspective, from that perspective one could say that you have a choice now to be present. Ultimately the only reason why you have a choice is that the evolutionary impulse of the universe is moving through you. From the limited perspective of an entity, it seems that you have a choice, and it's a good perspective.

I have a choice now, I can choose presence. How is it that you can choose presence? Because it's happening.

Ultimately it's not you choosing. So this is a deeper perspective. You don't have a choice, presence is emerging.

But as a temporary limited perspective, it's helpful to say, I have a choice. That's part of

the emerging presence, is to see that you have a choice, and later you can let go of that perspective. Because some of you have read certain teachings that say you have no choice, there's nothing you can do, go home.

It either happens or it doesn't happen. That's one kind of teaching, and that's one perspective, it has an element of truth also, but it's not the entire truth. No statement or perspective has the entire truth.

Another teaching says, unless you want liberation or enlightenment with the same urgency that a drowning person wants air, you won't get it. So which one am I going to believe? And they both seem reputable teachers, so is one of them wrong and the other one is right, or are they just different perspectives, and how can they ever be reconciled?

Where does the urgency come from with which I want liberation? It's all the one moving through you, but you can adopt different perspectives. Wanting liberation is good.

Wanting liberation in the future won't get you there. So if you shift the wanting liberation from future, a mudja, into now, wanting liberation now, then it works. And if you want liberation now, you realise there's nothing you can do beyond what already is.

Okay, let's see. If that impulse of wanting freedom, which usually seeks future, wanting implies you want something through future, if you see the fallacy of that, but don't go to the other polarity and say, okay, I've had it, I'm going home and watch every soap opera that there is and I'm going to drink beer, because there's nothing I can do anyway. No, the wanting that moves into future, can you move that wanting into now, that urgency, that seeking?

How can you seek in the now without future? There can be an intensity with which you face what is. So the seeking becomes an intensity of presence, and you meet the now with that intensity of alert presence.

Before that intensity became a mind movement of seeking, but now that intensity becomes the presence, and here's the now, and you embrace that in the field of presence, and uncompromising yes to what is. Now you've brought, and then the saying, the teacher that said there's nothing you can do was also right, because this is what is. Let's stop it here.

It's hard to reconcile seemingly opposite perspectives, but this was a little attempt to reconcile that there's nothing you can do, it's true, there's something you can do is also true, neither contains the entire truth, and it's happening now. So it's good whenever you are waiting somewhere, I mention that in the book, because it's amazing how much time people spend waiting for things in daily life. You're waiting on the phone, you're waiting on the computer, you're waiting at the bank, you're waiting at the post office, at the bus stop, at the traffic light, so much waiting, and most people are restless and

uneasy and needing to get to the future, and then there's the waiting for some bigger event to happen in your life, making it one day they will recognise me, and that could be a long wait. So you have all these short waits, and then you have the long waits.

Let's just talk about the short waits, how when you're waiting you can bring, connect with the inner body, at any moment when there's nothing else you can do, you might as well sense the aliveness that is here now, use that portal, no matter where, traffic light, telephone, post office, hold the line please, they say, and ten minutes later you're still there, and you could be in here. It doesn't really, it's only the mind that tells you, oh you're wasting time, you have to sit somewhere, so you might as well sit here, and you have to hold your hand in some position, you might as well hold the phone. It doesn't really matter.

Wherever you go, you'll be sitting or standing somewhere and moving in some way. Is the next moment going to be so much greater than this one? At the airport, flight is delayed by three hours.

Oh my, no, not again. Well, does it matter whether you sit on this chair there or whether you sit on the plane, or when you arrive home you sit in another chair? There isn't that much more in phenomenal universe, it's what you can do with this body is limited.

And then at times when you think, this is great, presence is arising, freedom is here, suddenly you get overtaken by this incredible heaviness, turbulence, a little trigger did it, and you're totally back in mind and heavy emotions that go with it, and the energy field that you are shifts so that some people hardly recognize you, so great is the shift. Pain body, the accumulation of past emotional pain, human pain, going back a million years, personal pain, to add to the pain that's already there in every human being for the simple reason that you are a human being on this planet living in the collective human unconsciousness that has created so much suffering already for itself. So you carry some of that suffering as an emotional field of pain with you, and then in your childhood you absorb more of it through the suffering of the child from parents, so there's this emotional field, an entity, temporary being that lives in you, that is the pain body, contracted life energy, can't flow anymore, an aspect of the egoic entity, the me, and sometimes it's not there, you can't feel it, it's there, but it's dormant, it can't remain dormant for too long because it needs to feed, it needs more pain to feed on, that's what it recognizes, that kind of emotional pain, it loves that, it doesn't know anything else. So I'm offering you a perspective on something that is very real, not ultimately real, but relatively real in you, and to say that it is like an entity that has its own little intelligence is quite close to the truth, not the absolute truth. It is not an enemy, there's nothing ultimately that's an enemy and that is not you, it is life energy, and the only reason why it's painful is it's stagnant, under pressure, turbulent or heavy, and through the egoic delusions, the me with its constant dissatisfaction and lack and future projections and not enough, that's been over many thousands of years, it's come into being in humans,

and then added to through the enormous suffering that humans have inflicted on other humans that increased it, and the torture, the rapes, killings, warfare almost continues in human history.

So humans have been through a lot. If humanity were one single being, you would say he or she has been through a lot. He's been through madness, well, hardly, just beginning to come out of it, and inflicted so much pain, suffered so much, and that's in every human being.

Sometimes the pain body is dormant, you can hardly feel it, not feel it at all, and when it needs to feed again, a little trigger, which could be just a thought in your head that you totally believe in, about yourself, about your relationship, about your position in the world, one little thought arises, you don't recognize it as a little thought, and you believe in it completely, and the pain body is ready to awaken, it will link into that thought, and suddenly it will come to life, it will awaken, and through that thought that's linked into, move into your mind, or it will use a reaction, a little thing goes wrong in your life, they keep you waiting for too long on the phone, or whatever it is, but the pain body was ready to awaken, and suddenly you get an enormous influx of turbulence, anger, or deep sadness, whatever the energy field of your pain body, the predominant energy field is, and then the pain body has awakened, and it will be feeding on your thought processes to start with, and they will reflect the energy field of the pain body, because the pain body can only feed on painful thoughts, and at that moment then you are totally identified, your sense of self, of me, the story of me, is totally identified with that movement of pain, totally identified with the thoughts that are being created by the pain body, and are feeding the pain body, a vicious circle. The old pain in you creates those thoughts, they're all total misinterpretations, they have perhaps a limited truth to them, but they are totally, a total distortion of the truth which is far beyond that, but every thought is totally believed in, and the emotion that comes with the thoughts is the pain body, and it's feeding on the thoughts and getting bigger, the more you think about yourself, or your life situation, the more it feeds, and you sit there in that heaviness or turbulence, and then you're waiting for somebody close to you to come and feed the pain body externally, to give you a reaction of pain, so that you can feed on your partner's or somebody else's reaction, pushing the buttons, and you get the feedback of emotional pain. Drama, I love it, give me more drama, this is, the heaviness of it, it could be the drama of anger, or it could be the drama of great heaviness, and the pain body is feeding, and it works, it uses your environment, at work it might do it, it's looking for pain. So beware when there are walking pain bodies around, and at any given time in the population, the people who are walking around the streets or driving cars, probably one can say 10% of those people are in the middle of pain body attack at any given time.

And they are dangerous, because they want something bad to happen. They don't know it, they don't say, they don't say I want something bad to happen, but they're looking for trouble. And we all meet people like that in that state, they are looking for something

bad to happen.

And they are looking at you, challenging you to give them some bad feedback, or the driver is looking for the accident. Many of accidents that happen in traffic are caused by driving pain bodies. They are looking for the next bad thing, and the obvious next bad thing when you're driving is an accident.

Particularly good when two driving pain bodies meet. Then the likelihood is very high that the accident will happen, and then they can create even more pain. There's a recent phenomenon in, I don't know if it's the same here, called road rage, where after the accident, it's not enough for the pain bodies to have caused the accident and feel bad about it, after the accident they jump out of their cars and beat each other up to feel even worse, even kill, some have killed others.

So violence becomes possible in very unconscious people, and there are still many around, when they are in the middle of a pain body attack. There are certain situations where the pain body is more likely to arise because there's very little consciousness in you at those times, getting drunk, for example. Males particularly are prone to becoming violent, more in certain cultures than in others, when they drink.

After a few drinks, they're looking for, and they find something. I mentioned in the book for women, menstruation is a time when the collective female pain body tends to come up, because there is a strong collective aspect to each person's pain body. There's a collective male pain body, there's a collective female pain body, and women have suffered tremendously as women for thousands of years.

The cultures have been patriarchal, and women have been subservient to men and used in many cultures almost like slaves. So there is a strong female pain body that arose through the suffering of women that tends to arise at the time of menstruation and just before, and a woman can observe it at that time and bring more, suddenly, how do you get beyond pain body, that vicious circle? Simply know that it is there.

Bring presence to it, bring, sense it, feel it, there it is, look at it, aware, give it some attention, and what else can you do except to say, there it is? But when you watch it as it arises in you, it cannot use your mind and become an even more unhappy story, more unhappy than even it is unhappy enough without the pain body, the story of me. But when the pain body comes, the story of me becomes dreadful, an awful drama or tragedy, a very self-destructive story, so the pain body doesn't feed anymore on your thinking when you are able to bring attention to it, recognize it, and allow it to be the heaviness or the turbulence, so that it doesn't turn into the illusory self.

And that is the primary challenge of all those who are now going through this transformation of consciousness. Their primary challenge is not to lose themselves again in the pain body each time it comes, because it has enormous momentum. Wow!

Enormous momentum is contained in that, and alertness is required so that you can recognize it when it comes, especially if you can recognize it in its early stages, just as it begins to come up as a reaction, as a thought, and you feel the heaviness descending or the turbulence coming up, hmm, there it is. Or you may recognize it next time, even in the middle of it, it can happen, as presence is arising, when you are having, re-enacting the weekly drama with your partner, to suddenly, in the middle of it, wake up, and you suddenly realize we are acting it out again, and to sense the turbulence of it, wow, this feels very agitated, very turbulent, wow, there's the pain body, interesting. What do you do with it?

You can't get rid of it just like that. It is, there it is, there's the human pain body. You allow it to be.

It's a strange thing to allow the pain body to be, and then the pain body is not a self anymore, it doesn't become a self, an unhappy self. All that's left of it is turbulence, or heaviness, or tightness, fear, anger, sadness, depression, whatever form, hmm, maybe there's one out there. So you will find pain body in yourself, and you will see it more easily in others, and it's the challenge, it's your challenge to recognize it, really all that's needed is to recognize it.

Don't have to do anything beyond that, but to see it for what it is, just the seeing. The seeing implies that you just let it be, you can't see it without letting it be. There it is.

All that's ultimately needed is to see it and say, there it is, and then continue to watch that. Then it cannot feed anymore on your thoughts. It doesn't become a self.

All that's left is, it's almost a physical thing now. It's emotional, but it has a very strong physical component. It changes the chemistry of your body.

If you could examine the inner chemistry of your body, you would see the changes in the body chemistry that happen every time pain body arises in you, color of the stomach lining changes to red, innumerable changes in circulation, how the organs function, you could examine all that, so it has a very strong physical component. It is almost reduced to a physical symptom when you watch it, emotional, half emotional, half physical. But the main thing is, it's no longer an entity, a me.

You don't mistake it anymore, and then it's not, the energy then gradually becomes transmuted. It becomes freed from its stuckness, it couldn't flow anymore, but by allowing it, it begins to flow again, the energy that was contained in here. And it's very often people with heavy pain bodies have the greatest motivation to become free, because they just can't stand it anymore.

Again and again, I was such a person, who had such a heavy pain body, that one night, when it came up very strongly again, I couldn't live with myself anymore. Now myself

was the pain body. And the mind made story, energized by the pain body, heavy, intolerable, I can't live with myself.

I didn't know at the time that that wasn't myself, but the sentence arose in my mind, I cannot live with myself any longer. I can't live with myself any longer, it's just too much. And then there was a stepping back from that thought, and I looked at the structure of the thought, I cannot live with myself.

Am I one or two? This sentence seems to imply that I'm two, I and the self that I cannot live with. Who is the self and who am I?

This could be a question that a Zen master might ask you, who is the self and who are you? It's a koan, but it could be. This koan arose spontaneously, it didn't have an answer, koans don't have real answers, not on the mind level, they just stop your mind.

And at that strange moment, I, and this is the whole essence of the teaching now, what happened that night, I didn't understand it at all until years later, I separated itself from the self, including the pain body. I, the sense of presence, consciousness, had become mixed with form, thought forms and emotional forms, the bundle of me. And suddenly, because it became so painful, I withdrew from identification with thoughts and emotions and remained in the state of the simple I am presence.

And I am is never unhappy, only the self is unhappy. I am is free, always. So it came out and then the self was no longer being sustained by identification with it, and it collapsed.

And what was left was, I am. And the next morning, I am said, how can I be so peaceful? What happened?

Something happened, but I don't know what. Just peace, wherever I go, there's peace. In the middle of the noisy traffic in the city, that's peaceful, everything is so peaceful, what happened?

No idea. I didn't know until years later that the self and the pain body had self-destructed. And this is relatively rare, I realized later.

For most humans, the process is a little bit more gradual. It's a gradual disidentification from the story, the mind-made self and the energy field of pain body. You're stepping out, you're drawn back in, step out, get drawn back in.

And gradually, presence arises more and more. But that was just amazing to see how the story of me evaporated. And then I didn't realize either that the peace was there, because there wasn't all that much thinking anymore.

Because without the story of me, there isn't that much to think about. And suddenly everything was so alive, which of course it always is. It was no longer obscured by the

veil of conceptualization and labeling.

Aliveness. Everywhere. Peace.

And so that's, then this is the universal process of recognition. The pain that is old pain is human pain. Nothing personal.

Not an identity. Just pain. So all that's required is to see it when it arises, instead of being it.

That is the illusion. Because then it's, I am that pain. I am that story that's associated with that pain.

I am very heavy. I am very unhappy. And so there's the simple seeing.

Then I am doesn't get mixed up with that. So that is our task, is to be there as the witness of the pain body, one could say, and let it be. And at first you won't sense a lot of space around it, because pain body at first occupies everything.

They can be so heavy that they seem to, they occupy your entire being and they seem to, that heaviness seems to color all your sense perceptions and all your thoughts and the entire world seems to be heavy with it. And so you allow it to be and at first there's just a little bit of space around it suddenly. And then suddenly there's a bit more space around it.

And the more you allow it to be, the greater the spaciousness around it. And then it seems, the pain body seems to shrink. It does shrink, but also it shrinks because you have a different perspective on it.

And then the space is so much vaster than that. This is the process of transformation. So also not making an identity out of the pain body for other human beings.

Because as you go through life, very often you encounter humans that are in the grip of pain body. And you will probably recognize it more easily now. If you know people well, you can see the shift that comes over them as the pain body takes them over, immediately, as the entire energy field changes.

And this has been a shock for many people who got married. These days it happens less, but in the past, many people got married without ever living together at first. So they would get married and then start living together.

And so after getting married, you would certainly meet your partner's pain body. It can be a dreadful shock because, of course, you didn't know what it was. You just thought, this was the person I married, the beautiful angel, or Mr. Right, and suddenly turns into this monster. Is he now showing his real face? Is that her real self that she's been hiding from me? And so it can easily be misinterpreted, and it's spoiled many honeymoons,

because it hasn't been recognized as the pain body.

You thought, oh, I made a dreadful mistake marrying that person. Of course, the truth is, whoever you marry will have a pain body unless they're already free, and there are not yet many that are free. Freedom is secondary from pain body.

The question is whether they are totally identified with it or not. As presence comes through you into the relationship, that will affect the other person also. If you can talk about the pain body when you're not being possessed by it in times of consciousness, talk about your last pain body attack and the drama that came out of it.

When was it? Oh yes, the day before yesterday. Where did it start?

How did it start? What triggered it? What did you first feel?

What did I first feel? And then what? And then we started shouting at each other, and then we were totally in it.

Isn't that interesting? And three hours later we finally came out of it. Three days later, who knows?

And so you can sometimes, I very rarely say think about the past, but in this instance, it occasionally can be helpful just to briefly relive a past pain body episode, and as you relive it, bring presence into it and watch what happened. If you watch what happened, it'll be easier to watch what happens when it happens again. Then you can watch it then, as you watched it.

It's a little bit easier, much easier in fact, to watch a past pain body attack, because you have a distance, it's only a memory, but even then it can happen as you start to remember it, it's happening again. So if you bring your attention back with your partner and say let's look at the last pain body drama that we went through, and if you're not alert, it can happen that reliving it can activate it again, and before long you're shouting at each other again, no it didn't start in me, it started in you. You were the first to say, no it didn't.

And then perhaps in the middle of that you suddenly wake up. When you wake up, it's the most beautiful thing that could happen, is to wake up in the middle of a pain body attack and suddenly laugh or smile. That's the beginning of liberation, then it's really happening.

And there are couples now who are, to whom this is happening. If you don't yet wake up in the middle of it, you wake up just afterwards, oh there it was again. If your partner doesn't want to hear about pain body, then what can you do?

If you say let's talk about pain body and he says, I don't want to hear about pain body.

You do your own thing, I do my thing. And so all you can do is stay present when his or her pain body comes up.

And it wants you to be unhappy too, that's what pain bodies do. And it will do everything it can to make you unhappy and finally get a reaction. So you have to be really present and then if one partner stays conscious, it cannot not affect the other.

Or in frustration, the other is going to leave you. The frustration is that the pain body is not being fed enough living with you. And so the pain body says, okay, I'm going to look for somewhere else for pain because this is not feeding me.

It also happens that people feel strongly attracted to each other because their pain bodies are mutually compatible. And sometimes this is the basis of certain relationships. It's unconscious, of course.

So they are acting out what they have to act out and it works perfectly. And that strong, compelling pull towards another person that is sometimes called falling in love, that enormous pull towards another person is sometimes, or has a strong element quite often, also of a pain body that recognises a compatible pain body. And pain body can get mixed up with sexuality also, of only feeling sexually excited with somebody who is going to cause you some pain.

It doesn't have to be physical necessarily, but some kind of drama involved, that pain in the drama that can give you a stimulus. And again, if that's the case, just watching it is helpful, it's enough. If that is, and this happens more often than humans realise, and some humans are condemned to repeating the same cycle unconsciously.

They say, this time I want a husband who is kind and helpful and gentle and compassionate, not that jerk that I had last time. And then you think you find the one and you start living together and suddenly the same jerk comes out again. And you thought he was gentle and compassionate, but you got attracted to his pain body.

And it comes out, and suddenly, the same thing again. That was the attraction. That is described, there was some years ago, there was a very popular book, it didn't mention pain body as such, but it mentioned from the perspective of women, women who love too much, was the title, how unconsciously, through being forced to act out certain conditioned patterns, continuously choose the wrong man.

It happens to men also of course. So this is very interesting to watch in oneself, in one's relationship. Pain bodies with children, children have pain bodies also.

Children also suffer from pain body attacks. Most children do. If you are a parent, you will then recognise when a child is suddenly totally taken over by his or her pain body.

Whatever the child does, withdraws completely, has a screaming fit, throws him or

herself on the floor, throws things, is transformed in one moment from an angel into a monster. And many parents have witnessed that in their children, say, what is going on here? They don't realise it happens to them also.

Maybe a little bit more disguised, it's the human pain body in the child. And so a parent can simply point out to the child afterwards, not in the middle, except later on, but at first not in the middle of it, afterwards, what was that? What did it feel like?

Wasn't that strange? When did you first feel it? Does it have a name?

Temporary name or only temporary? Oh, it's called the green monster. Okay.

And so occasionally it comes and gets hold of you. Yeah. Okay.

Two days later, the pain body, you can watch, oh, is the green monster coming? There it is. And then of course the pain body will already be in the child and the pain body will always deny itself and it will say, no, I'm not the green monster.

Your partner will do the same. If you say to your partner, is that your pain body? He or she will throw something at you and deny it.

The pain body will never admit that it's the pain body. Oh yes, I am the pain body. So this is the work of, you help children.

If they teach at school that pain bodies happen, that people have pain bodies and that you can actually watch it, that would be an enormous thing to tell, even a five-year-old will understand it because it's so simple, it's so obvious. There it is. And then presence can arise.

That's it. So the pain body seems an obstacle, but it's the greatest incentive for becoming free. And it's almost as if the energy that is contained in there then becomes the fuel for consciousness, becomes the fuel for presence, becomes transmuted and is transmuted into presence.

And so it often is that people with very heavy pain bodies quickly go beyond, disidentify from. People with moderate pain bodies, they can live with themselves. They have found an arrangement of living with themselves.

Periodically, yes, they get unhappy, but it's okay, I can manage. But if you're very heavy, you get so fed up with yourself that you will want to be free. In Eastern terms, one could say pain body is karma because it's the accumulated, it's an aspect of karma, it's the accumulated past in you, the conditioned past in you, which you identify as yourself.

That is karma. To identify with a conditioned past in me as myself is acting out karma. And the acting out of karma is the renewing of karma.

Action, reaction, that's the meaning of karma. Action, reaction, it's the vicious circle. You're being forced to act out your conditioning.

And a large part of your conditioning is the human collective conditioning. So that's the action of karma. In karma you can't really get to the end of karma through time.

You can't really say, okay, if I wait long enough, finally I will come to the end of karma. No, because it renews itself. The end of karma is not through time, but through accessing the power of now.

Then you come to the end of action, reaction. So it's only in the now that karma dissolves, through accessing the power that is inherent here in this presence. Wonderful.

Many of you would not be here if it weren't for your pain bodies. Already you've created so much trouble and suffering for yourself that you had to wake up, just as I did. So you're waking up.

When we have these gatherings, time passes very quickly. It's strange. And so it's happened again.

It's only been one moment that's why it passed so quickly. There may be some questions in your minds, but the clock tells us that we need to stop now. What about these questions?

Is there any question that is truly critical, that you need to know the answer to? There can be no presence unless you know the answer to this question. And you cannot surrender to what is unless you know the answer.

No, there isn't. We don't need any questions.